

Instructor's Guide to
Utility Organizational Management

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Instructor's Guide

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Foreword

The key to a successful class is two-fold. First, it is important that the students be presented the subject matter in a clear fashion. Second, and also of great value, is for students to develop a rapport with the instructors and colleagues. If this happens, long after the class is completed, these students will be calling their peers and the instructors for advice and comments. Therefore an important aspect of the instructors' job is to foster this networking and melding of each participant's wisdom and experience, on or off formal class time.

The design of this course is intended to allow the instructors enough flexibility to respond to each class and their individual circumstances and personalities. Please feel free to sculpt it to the needs of the class.

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General Considerations

Room Setup Suggestions:

Equipment needed:

- Overhead projector
- Screen
- Blank overhead sheets
- Overhead markers
- Blackboard, whiteboard or flip chart
- Markers for above as appropriate
- Chairs and tables
- Name tags student's name and community
- Desk tents with student's name and community
- Kitchen timer

Provide for each student:

- Student Manual
- Three-hole punched blank paper
- Pencils and pens

The use of freestanding chairs and tables rather than writing desks gives the students the options of shifting their chairs during the class, particularly during the group exercises. Better yet, have a separate area for group discussions, so groups are not too close to each other. There should be a storage area for student's coats, extra books etc, so students can keep their desk relatively clear.

The kitchen timer is good if you have trouble getting exercises done in the allotted time, or getting back to work after breaks. Set the timer for a specific amount of time and when it dings, everyone knows it's time to wrap up. This frees you from one more thing to think about. If you don't want to use the timer, consider assigning a willing and able student as timekeeper, or another instructor.

Three hole punched notepaper used to take notes on can be immediately inserted into the appropriate spot in the student manual so as not to get lost. Students can also write notes in the wide margins of the manual. There should be plenty of good pens available and a phone nearby but not in the same room as the class.

Coffee, tea and snacks should be available at the back of the room or in an adjoining room. Encourage the students to take advantage of the breaks and lunch times to get to know one another and discuss class topics. Try to be available yourselves to answer questions and participate in these discussions. Set a casual atmosphere.

Course Delivery

Design of the course

The course was designed with a logical progression of the material in mind. Defining the **level of service** comes first because a utility needs to know exactly what they are trying to do before they can do it. Then they can design or refine their **organizational structure** to accomplish what it is they are trying to do, and define the **roles** of the key stakeholders. At this point, a good portion of the **ordinance** material has been dealt with and it can be tackled. **Customer agreements** are next—

the practical aspects of interacting with the customers. At the end is some time for discussion of public relations and dealing with agencies—the **communication section**—and work space and information management—the **administration section**.

The important thing to remember, and to verbalize to the class from the onset, is that these neat segments really are all mixed together in real life. You cannot isolate them. Use the overview time at the start of the course to make sure the students know what you are talking about when you bring in concepts to the discussion that have not been covered in a main lesson. This is especially true concerning public relations and customer service, not commonly talked about topics, but ones that underlie the entire business. Another is the concept of enterprise.

Delivering the material

As much as possible the course should follow the sequence outlined in this guide and in the student manual. This makes it easier for the student to follow along in their manual and also for them to find things later based on when the material was presented. There is always room for flexibility though, especially in how long you spend on each subject. You will know this when you get a feel for the level and special situations of the students.

The course was designed to alternate between instructor presentations and more student-active periods such as the exercises and review worksheets. Even during the instructor presentations, try to vary the delivery by encouraging student questions and posing some to them. Switch back and forth between the overhead projector and the flip chart (or black or white board). You do not need to steadily plop each overhead on the projector one after another. You may choose to skip one or two now and then and write or diagram the concept in your own way on the board.

Suggested Course Time Lines

This class is composed of eight four-hour segments corresponding to the lessons in the student manual. A hypothetical class would start Monday after lunch and end Friday at noon, but the same sequence can be repositioned for whatever time is allotted to teach the course. The sequence laid out in the student manual and this guide is given in the chart below. A more detailed sequence is given in the notes for each of the segments.

Description of the Pre/Post Test

The pre/post test is used to test growth of knowledge. The pre-test is given the first hour of the first day. The pre/post test is designed to cover the full range of material and to try to hit the most important concepts. Since it is assumed that the students know little of the subject when they start the class, they will usually not do well. Then, at the end of the class, when they take the post test, we hope they pass with flying colors. This will be proof that learning has been achieved in the class.

For statistical accuracy, you can give the same test at the end as at the beginning. There are, however, enough questions to give a different test at the end.

Function of Key Terms in the Text

The emphasis on key words in the text is for one very important reason. When a utility manager has to pick up the phone and call someone outside the village, they will have to use the vocabulary of the industry. Even if many of these terms are not used in the village, when talking to the DEC, EPA or their RUBA, these words will be standard.

Suggestions for the Use of the Exercises

The exercises are a large part of the course. There are more exercises than most classes will be able to do, so it's the instructor's prerogative to determine which exercises to use and when and how they will be used. Because of this flexibility, the sequence of delivery does not contain the exercises and can't be calibrated to a time schedule. However, a grid has been provided for lesson planning to make it easier to schedule your time. The exercises, blocks of overheads and other lesson elements have estimated times next to them on the sequence of delivery. Notes for instructors about each exercise appear for each lesson after the sequence of delivery. The individual exercises are headed with time and material requirements and some general instructions. These remarks are intended for both instructor and student and the exercise sheets are ready to copy for class distribution.

Work on introducing and starting each exercise so the students are excited about it. Guide them along so they stay on the core material, and keep an eye on the clock. Feel free to tailor the exercises to meet the particular needs of the class. When the exercise calls for breaking the class into groups, try to mix them up now and then, but allow them to do several exercises with the same group too. This way they can get to know all the other students at least a little and begin to feel comfortable with a subset.

Suggestions for the Use of the Review Worksheets

Review worksheets are important to the student because they are a summing up of the important lessons of that section of the class. Realistically, there is no way for the instructors to give a test for every section of the text. There is not that much time. On the other hand, it's important for the students to have some guide as to what they were *supposed* to have learned. If they can respond to the worksheets at the end of each chapter, they know they have learned the minimum required in the class.

Explain to the class that the worksheets can be filled out during the presentation of the lesson, or during the time given at the end of the lesson. If they have done the former, ask them to read over their worksheet one more time at the end. They will likely find a few answers they want to change. Mostly it will enhance the retention. You can collect the worksheets and look them over, or go over the answers as a class and have them correct their own. A good idea is to use both methods. The first time or two collect them so you can keep close tabs and make sure there are no problem areas. At other times have them correct their own, and you can still scan them if you want.

Remember there are often several valid answers that will fit in the blanks. While the worksheets were meant to be filled out right as the instructor goes over the very topic, sometimes with the text or the instructor giving the answer word-for-word, different but perfectly correct words in the blanks usually indicate a good understanding of the material.

Suggestions for the Use of the Action Plans

The whole point of this course is to *use* the material to improve the management of small utilities in Alaska. To encourage this, an action plan is drawn up based on what areas the student sees as most needing work in their utility. Instead of waiting to the end of the class, it is highly recommended that students write out action items, or at least rough notes toward that goal, at the end of each lesson while the material is fresh. At the end of the course, they will look these over, delete some,

add others and reword them into solid action plans to take home and start working on. There is a note taking page with an area for action items at the end of each lesson.

suggestions for the use of the timing grids

After choosing the exercises to be used in a lesson, you can use the provided grids to sequence teaching from overheads or flip charts with exercises, worksheets and review etc. Simply write in each teaching item, the estimated time to complete the item, and the clock time when you should be done based on starting at a certain time. The extra columns are for another class, writing in actual times etc. Don't forget a 10-15 minute break every hour to hour and a half. Here's an example with an 8:00 start time:

item	est time	finish time		
overheads 1-3	0:30	8:30		
exercise 1	0:30	9:00		
break	0:10	9:10		
overheads 4-6	0:45	9:55		
exercise 2	:30	10:25		
break	0:10	10:35		
exercise 3	0:25	11:00		
worksheet	0:30	11:30		
wrap up & homework	0:30	12:00		

Suggested Reference Material

Note to instructors: This section is reprinted from the student manual

There has always been a large body of knowledge “out there” about running a utility. Now, it is more accessible than ever. Government, educational and non-profit organizations are eager for you to make use of their offerings. Those with access to the Internet can access a virtual avalanche of information.

The Operations Assistance & Lending Library at the Alaska DEC office in Juneau has many training aides available for free, loan or small fee. See their contact info below.

For specific, nuts-and-bolts reading—particularly when writing the utility ordinance—contact the Alaska Public Utilities Commission in Anchorage (1-907-276-6222) for copies of tariffs by regulated water and wastewater utilities across Alaska as well as their application forms for Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity.

Introduction & Overview

For dealing with regulations there is a free book and available through ADEC: *A Plain English Guide To Alaska Drinking Water And Wastewater Regulations*. It is written specifically for operators and managers of rural utilities. You can request a copy from ADEC or download it from:

www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/ENV.CONSERV/deh/water/plainguide.pdf

For guidance with record keeping, the *Local Government Retention Schedule* from the state Archives office can be helpful. It can be obtained from:

Department of Education
Division of Libraries, Archives & Museums
Archives & Records Management Services
141 Willoughby Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801-1720
(907) 465-2317 FAX: (907) 465-2465

Here's more:

The Alaska Training/Technical Assistance Center (ATTAC)

John Carnegie, director

1-888-750-3823 FAX: (907) 747-7753.

www.water-alaska.org

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/ENV.CONSERV/

Operations Assistance & Lending Library

410 Willoughby Ave. Room 102, Juneau AK 99801-1795

(907) 465-5140 or (907) 465-5143

[access their web site through the ADEC home page above](#)

Drinking Water and Wastewater Program

James Weise, Program Manager

ADEC Div. of Environmental Health

555 Cordova Street

Anchorage, AK 99501-2617

(907) 269-7647 Fax: (907) 269-7655

Email: jweise@envircon.state.ak.us

Village Safe Water Program

(907) 465-5137 Juneau

(907) 269-2617 Anchorage

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Criteria and Standards Division

Office of Drinking Water (WH-550D)

401 Market St SW, Washington DC

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE 1-800-426-4791

www.epa.gov/OGWDW/

U.S. Public Health Service/Indian Health Service

www.ihs.gov

Alaska Water/Waste Management Association (AWWMA)

PO Box 244141, Anchorage AK 99524-4141 (907) 561-9777

www.ptialaska.net/~awwma/1AWMA.html

American Water Resources Association, Alaska Section

(907) 677-2601

www.uwin.siu.edu/~awra/state/alaska/

American Water Works Association (AWWA)

AWWA 6666 West Quincy Ave.

Denver, CO 80235

(303) 794-7711

(202) 628-8303

www.awwa.org

West Virginia University

P.O. Box 6064

West Virginia University

Morgantown, WV 26506-6064

(304) 293-4191 or (800) 624-8301 Fax: (304) 293-3161

National Drinking Water Clearinghouse

www.ndwc.wvu.edu

National Small Flows Clearinghouse

www.nsfc.wvu.edu

National Environmental Training Center

www.netc.wvu.edu

National Sanitation Foundation

3475 Plymouth Rd, Ann Arbor MI 48105

1-800-NSF-MARK or (734)-769-8010

www.nsf.org/

E-mail: info@nsf.org

Texas Water Resources Institute

301 Scoates Hall, Texas A&M University

College Station, TX 77843-2118

(409) 845-1851 FAX (409) 845-8554

<http://twri.tamu.edu/>

E-mail: twri@tamu.edu

Introduction & Overview

Great pages of links, among the other information.

Water-Wastewater Web

www.w-ww.com/

Vendors, links and a free web page for your utility.

The Utility Connection

www.utilityconnection.com/

Over 2400 utility links.

Utility tips & ideas

<http://members.aol.com/tipsideas/index.htm>

Lesson Specifics

Introduction and Overview

Key concepts to teach:

The hallmarks of a successful utility

Why operating on an enterprise philosophy is important

What written documents guide the operation of a utility

Key terms for students to know:

Enterprise

Presentation Sequence

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Welcome	<p>:40</p> <p>This first part of this block of time will be used up for arrival of the students, check-in and the passing out of workbooks. This is a casual time so students should be encouraged to meet their peers and begin to network.</p> <p>Introduction of course: give a brief review of the nature of the course, who funded it, who is sponsoring it, and how it fits into the big picture.</p> <p>Introductions: The instructors should first introduce themselves and tell a little about themselves. Then go around the room and have the students introduce themselves. Give them a simple list of things to tell, such as name, community, job title, how long they have been on the job, and what do they like to do on their time off.</p> <p>Try to foster an informal and friendly atmosphere so students can get to know each other and interact. Instructors should compile a list of students with their phone, fax and email address to pass out later and encourage ongoing conversations.</p>
Pre-test	<p>:45</p> <p>The test itself should only take about 20-30 minutes. The extra time is to explain it, pass it out, and pick it up.</p>
Overview	<p>:50</p> <p>This time seems generous but you may need it to account for schedule problems. There is also value in opening up discussion and getting to know the students and their situations early on. Overhead 4 alone can spawn lots of discussion.</p>
Overheads 1-4	Some basic class information
Overheads 5-8	Be especially careful with the concept of enterprise. It is a very important concept but one that is often misinterpreted. And we always say “ <i>like</i> a business,” rather than give the impression they are to all of a sudden become a profit hungry corporation.
Worksheet & action items	<p>:20</p> <p>Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later. There are fewer worksheet questions in this first lesson and may not be many action items spawned. Possible action items to throw out to the group might be writing a mission statement and adopting the enterprise philosophy.</p>

General Considerations

Wrap-up & Homework

Assign the *Level of Service* and *Organizational* chapters to be read before tomorrow's class. Ask them to jot down any questions or issues they come across as they read.

Exercise notes

Exercise 1

:30 Mission statement

This exercise gets the students thinking about the purpose of their utility, and gives them some practice communicating that in writing. Can be used any time during the lesson.

Exercise 2

:30 Explaining “enterprise”

This exercise gets the students thinking about the idea of an enterprise, and gives them more practice in written communication. Can be used any time after the concept has been taught.

Exercise 1 Mission Statement

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group, use flip chart, blackboard etc if possible.

Format: groups of 5-6

Instructions: choose a scribe and spokesman. Brainstorm ideas for a mission statement for a utility. After 10 minutes (sharp), stop and take what has been written and mold it into a compact mission statement of 1 or 2 sentences that expresses the reason the utility continues to exist.

General Considerations

Exercise 2 Explaining “Enterprise”

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each person/group.

Format: Individually or groups of 3-4.

Setting: You are the manager of a small rural utility. A week ago you were quoted as saying the utility should be run as a business. This was widely misunderstood and even distorted, and you’ve come under a lot of fire. Your board does not even back you. You’ve decided to prepare an insert to go out with the bills in a few days to explain yourself.

You want to explain what you meant by “enterprise” and why that concept will be good for the utility and its customers. You have room for about 250 words which would be enough to briefly cover 4-6 important concepts.

Instructions:

Outline your 4-6 main points. If you have time, word them into text that might go into such a insert.

As a class, go over the points people came up with and write them on a flip chart or board. Any finished wording could be read aloud or displayed for the class to read.

Worksheet — Introduction & Overview

1. A successful utility is operated as an _____.
2. The successful manager has a _____ of how the utility should be operated and is able to _____ with the staff and customers.
3. A successful utility has good support from _____.
4. A successful utility is _____ to customer concerns, regulations, system condition, water quality, and employee concerns.
5. A successful utility has written out the details of how the utility is run and its relations with _____ in easy to access documents such as:
_____, _____, _____, _____.
6. Once the level of service is defined, a utility can more accurately plan to _____ that level of service.
7. The document which gives the utility its existence and operating rules is called the _____.
8. Customer agreements are _____ contracts that are shorter and more specific than the ordinance.
9. Public relations is important for a small utility to _____, and educate its customers.

General Considerations

Worksheet ANSWER KEY — Introduction & Overview

10. A successful utility is operated as an enterprise.
11. The successful manager has a clear view of how the utility should be operated and is able to communicate with the staff and customers.
12. A successful utility has good support from its customers.
13. A successful utility is proactive to customer concerns, regulations, system condition, water quality, and employee concerns.
14. A successful utility has written out the details of how the utility is run and its relations with customers in easy to access documents such as:
organizational chart
utility ordinance
user agreements
employee handbook
and job descriptions, etc.
15. Once the level of service is defined, a utility can more accurately plan to meet that level of service.
16. The document which gives the utility its existence and operating rules is called the utility ordinance.
17. Customer agreements are legal contracts that are shorter and more specific than the ordinance.
18. Public relations is important for a small utility to build support, and educate its customers.

Level of Service

Key concepts to teach:

How utilities evolve through progression of service

Why defining the level of service is important

Why community input and communication is critical when defining level of service

How to define the level of service by examining six utilities facets

What level of service stipulations should go in the utility ordinance and which should go elsewhere (such as in the rate schedule or personnel manual)

Key terms for students to know:

Level of Service

Master Plan

Annual Operations Plan

Assets

Capital

Renewal and Replacement

Adequacy

Presentation Notes

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Level of Service

Level of Service intro (1-4) :30

Overhead 2

Spend some time discussing the terms and concepts at the beginning of the chapter to make sure everyone understands the terms precisely, not ‘sort-of.’ Make sure everyone is comfortable with the concept of level of service. If they are having trouble maybe they are assuming it is more complicated than it is. Try this illustration: One person goes into a fast food restaurant and orders a hamburger. Another goes into a fancy restaurant and also orders a hamburger. They are both getting the same thing, right? Well, the one at the fancy restaurant will get a leaner burger with fresher lettuce and tomato, cheddar cheese instead of American and will also have it brought to him at a nice table. The level of service is clearly different, including the actual product. Also remind them that the second person will pay a lot more for that nice burger and service. Ask how many think the better burger and service is worth the extra price. Ask how many would think the fast food burger is good enough for them considering the savings. Then you can launch into the similarities of that scene with utilities and how communities must come to terms with what it is worth to them to “buy” a certain level of service.

Overheads 3-4

Talk about why understanding and using level of service is important. If the students have read their manuals you should be able to connect by referring to the story of the fictitious village which neglected to make conscious level of service decisions.

Defining level of service :45

Overheads 5-7

Defining level of service. There is much more detail in the manual on the 6 areas to consider.

Worksheet and Action Items :30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework :30

You can go over the worksheets or just review the lesson as a whole. They should have already read the next lesson last night. If they have not, they will need to take part of their lunch break to do so.

Exercise notes

Exercise 1

:30 Memo from the Mayor

This exercise teaches that maintenance is a level of service issue, that one change (the proposed rebates) usually has a change elsewhere in the system, and that the cost of not doing something can be high. Can be used at just about any stage of lesson.

Exercise 2

:30 Role Playing

See notes on first page of exercise. Use after the group has loosened up a bit and heard some of the material

Exercise 3

:20-:30 Points to Ponder

Give one or two questions to each group, or choose two or three to discuss as a class. The questions can also be interspersed as class discussion earlier in the lesson. More than one group can answer the same question. Use after most or all the material has been presented.

Exercise 4

:45

Determining Level of Service

This exercise can be used after the students are getting a feel for the concept of level of service. It will help them figure out what it means on a real-life level. Have them hold onto these sheets and add or amend as they develop the eye for level of service issues.

Level of Service

Exercise 1 Memo From the Mayor

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: copies of the memo below. Paper and pen for each group.

Format: Groups of 3-4

Setting: You are the utility manager of a village with a piped water/sewer system. The city council (who passes your budget) is trying to help you reduce your expenditures even though you did not ask them to do so. You get the following memo from the Mayor.

From: the Mayor

To: Utility manager

“It has come to my attention that it costs \$196 every time you pull up and lubricate one of those pumps at the sewer lift stations. This is causing undue strain on your operating budget. I’m sure that money could be used more wisely. How about giving a rebate to your customers on the high bills they are paying? I recommend you lubricate those pumps at double the interval you have been.”

Instructions: Select a notetaker and spokesman. Discuss these questions and be prepared to report your conclusions to the class:

- 1) What do you think of the Mayor’s idea to reduce the maintenance interval? Why?
- 2) What are some possible consequences of such a plan?
- 3) How is this issue related to level of service?
- 4) What options do you have for responding to the Mayor’s memo? Which are the best?

Exercise 2 (page 1) Role Playing (instructor's notes)

Time Required: 30 minutes

Materials needed: scenario and positions on the next two pages. Paper and pen for each group.

Format: an even number of groups, preferably groups of 3-5 people each.

Instructor's Notes:

Half of the groups will represent a utility customer and half will represent the utility. Present each side with the scenario and their position briefing. Give them 5 minutes with just their group to coordinate on strategy. Then have them sit down at a mock negotiating table to try to work it out with the other group for 15 minutes. Give them input only if they are really not getting anywhere either because they aren't coming up with anything or if they are going the other way and are getting too animated.

After the 15 minutes, have each group report to the class via a spokesman what solutions they came up with and what they learned about how level of service wording in the ordinance would have prevented or at least helped solve the problem.

Level of Service

Exercise 2 (page 2) Role Playing (instructions for customer group)

Time Required: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: an even number of groups, preferably groups of 3-5 people each.

Instructions:

Your group will represent a utility customer; the other group will represent the utility. Read the scenario and your position briefing. Use 5 minutes with just your group to coordinate on strategy. Then sit down at a mock negotiating table to try to work out the problems for 15 minutes.

After the 15 minutes, prepare to report to the class via a spokesman what solutions you came up with and what you learned about how level of service wording in the ordinance would have prevented or at least helped solve the problem.

Scenario:

You live in the village of Walrus Whisker that has a utility with 100 customers. There are 93 residential customers, a school, a church, two stores, two fish processing facilities, and a small engine repair shop (your group). The problem customer is the repair shop, who is refusing to pay its bill. The utility is trying to collect that bill. The customer is asking for a different rate.

Customer Position

While it may be technically true that you are a business, you feel you are really a residential user. You set the business up in an abandoned home which you are buying and should therefore be charged as a residential customer. In fact, you use a lot less water than some of the larger families in the village and they are charged a residential rate. Further, there's no way to prove you are a business because you don't have a business license and don't need one: you live in an unincorporated area. See if you can get a special rate, or at least offer a compromise.

Exercise 2 (page 3) Role Playing (instructions for utility group)

Time Required: 30-40 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: an even number of groups, preferably groups of 3-5 people each.

Instructions:

Your group will represent a utility customer; the other group will represent the utility. Read the scenario and your position briefing. Use 5 minutes with just your group to coordinate on strategy. Then sit down at a mock negotiating table to try to work out the problems for 15 minutes.

After the 15 minutes, prepare to report to the class via a spokesman what solutions you came up with and what you learned about how level of service wording in the ordinance would have prevented or at least helped solve the problem.

Scenario:

You live in the village of Walrus Whisker that has a utility with 100 customers. There are 93 residential customers, a school, a church, two stores, two fish processing facilities, and a small engine repair shop. The problem customer is the repair shop, who is refusing to pay its bill. The utility (your group) is trying to collect that bill. The customer is asking for a different rate.

Utility Position

This customer has been nickel-and-diming you for nine months. He doesn't pay his bill and then whines about how he is really a residential customer. But he doesn't fit your idea of a residential customer. While he may not be a big industry, he is definitely not a residential customer and you don't want to set up a new class of customers because it's going to cost you about \$400 worth of paperwork – and who knows, maybe the fish processors might ask to have their rates reduced? See if you can convince him he should pay the commercial rate, or explore alternatives.

Level of Service

Exercise 3 points to ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: Break into groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1. *Describe the concept of level of service to a subsistence hunter who doesn't understand why he should pay any utility bill at all because the utility was funded by a state grant.*
2. *How do you figure out how much a commercial customer should be paying if their water is not metered?*
3. *Analyze the following statements: Raising the level of service always results in higher cost. To lower costs, you need to lower the level of service.*
4. *In what ways is the decision to meter all customers a level of service decision?*

Exercise 4 Determining Level of Service

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: Break into groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: For your community's utility write down the level of service that you provide in these areas:

Response time for customer reported repairs

Water Quality

Water Quantity

Washeteria hours

Office hours

Sewage Treatment

Level of Service

Worksheet – Level of Service

1. Level of service refers to what _____ and _____ are delivered to customers and at what _____ level.
2. Defining the level of service reveals the _____ cost of operating the facility.
3. Defining the level of service helps _____ and _____ disputes.
4. Changes in the level of service must be written in the _____.
5. A crucial early step in defining the level of service is gathering _____
_____.
6. The community must reconcile what it _____ with what it is willing to
_____.
7. Six areas of your Utility to examine when defining level of service are
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, and _____.
8. State and federal regulations set the _____ requirement for a utility.
9. A good customer relations program can _____
_____.
10. _____ is usually the largest segment of Operations and Maintenance.
11. Routine maintenance should be paid for with _____.
12. Good customer service dictates that the utility manager be _____ to the
_____.
13. Having water meters on all connections allows a utility to set _____
_____, track down _____ and reduce _____
_____.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY – Level of Service

14. Level of service refers to what products and services are delivered to customers and at what quality level.
15. Defining the level of service reveals the true cost of operating the facility.
16. Defining the level of service helps prevent and resolve disputes.
17. Changes in the level of service must be written in the ordinance.
18. A crucial early step in defining the level of service is gathering community input.
19. The community must reconcile what it wants with what it is willing to pay for.
20. Six areas of your Utility to examine when defining level of service are
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, and _____.
21. State and federal regulations set the minimum requirement for a utility.
22. A good customer relations program can pay for itself.
23. Labor is usually the largest segment of Operations and Maintenance.
24. Routine maintenance should be paid for with customer fees collected.
25. Good customer service dictates that the utility manager be available to the customers.
26. Having water meters on all connections allows a utility to set rates fairly, track down water loss and reduce customer waste.

Organizational Structure

Key Concepts to Teach

The importance of a good organizational structure
How to assert independence from local government
How to establish a functional chain of command
They value of assuring flexibility
How to choose an organizational model that fits

Key Terms Students Should Know

Policy making body
Stakeholder
Autonomy
Organizational chart

Presentation Sequence

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Review :10

Start with a review of yesterday's class. Make sure the concept of level of service has sunk in. Ask if anyone has any questions.

Organizational Structure (1-13) 1:00

Overheads 1-3

A short discussion of the benefits of good organization.

Overheads 4-6

Go over the basics parts of a utility, stakeholders and the example org chart. Make sure they understand how an org chart works because they will soon be drawing them

Overheads 7-10

These overheads cover the nuts and bolts of policy making body models. This will be the loosest of the sections because not all of the utilities have the same type of structure.

Focus on these critical elements – which are reflected in the exercises:

- Utilities should be organized to be functional, not political.
- Utilities should operate as an enterprise even if they are nonprofit.
- Utilities should have an organizational structure that keeps its money fee and separate from every other governmental body or village corporation.

Overheads 11-13

These cover the nuts and bolts of staff models. Stress: utilities should give their staff a clear view of where they fit in while allowing as much flexibility as is reasonable.

Overhead 14 :10

Wrap up the lesson with these miscellaneous points, but use the time to clear up or re-emphasize any areas which need it. Additional discussion will surely spring up.

Worksheet and Action Notes :30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework :20

You can go over the worksheets or just review the lesson as a whole. Read next 2 lessons.

Exercise notes

Exercise 1 :35 Analyze the Organization

You could do the first one as a class and then break into groups.

Exercise 2 :35 Analyze *Your* Organization

Organizational Structure

This exercise gets the student down and dirty into their own setup. You may need to give over-the-shoulder help to some.

Exercise 3 :20 Points to Ponder

These discussion questions can done as an exercise or be interspersed throughout the lesson.

Exercise 1 Analyze the Organization

Time needed: 30-40 minutes

Materials needed: Paper (large paper best) or flip chart or board; pens or markers.

Format: Can be done as a class, in groups of 3-4 or individually.

Instructions: Read and analyze each of the hypothetical village situations below. Decide which policy making body model and which staff model might work best for each (use the models described in this class). Then draw an organizational chart for each. Be prepared to share your findings with the rest of the class.

1. This village of 1200 people is in the middle of a massive sanitation upgrade which will place 80% of its residents on a utilidor piped sewer/water system with the remaining 20% on the old flush-haul system. The local governing council is active but often contentious. They have a mayor but a professional city manager has been hired to run day-to-day affairs. The new system will require the equivalent of 3 full time operators and 1.5 full time clerks. How would you structure the utility?

2. This village has 172 people and a 4-year-old washeteria. The village council only meets every other month and sometimes summer meetings are cancelled. The guy who runs the washeteria keeps it going consistently and manages 3 part time staff with little problem. What would be an efficient way to chart the organization?

3. Village 3, population 466, has installed a vacuum sewer and hauled water system that seems to work OK. The city council meetings here are exciting, with heated debate and accusations of nepotism that fly around the room. Utility business does not get much attention unless rates are mentioned or there is a job opening. What might be a good structure for this utility?

Organizational Structure

Exercise 2 Analyze *Your* Organization

Time needed: 30-40 minutes

Materials needed: Blank paper and pen for each person.

Format: Start individually, then discuss in groups of 3-4.

Instructions: Chart your utility's current structure on an organizational chart. Place a question mark next to items that you are unsure of. Place an exclamation mark next to items that are current or potential sources of problems.

With the small group, share your chart and any troubles you had drawing it, or any peculiarities etc.

Save your chart for later use!

Exercise 3 points to ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: Break into groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1. *What are the benefits and dangers of a city government controlling a utility?*

2. *Do you think it is better to combine the duties of manager and operator into one full-time position, or have a half-time person for each position, shared with the city?*

3. *If separation between the utility and political bodies is a good thing, how much of a good thing is too much? In other words, what checks and balances should be built in?*

4. *What skills, personality traits, background would you look for in hiring a utility manager vs. electing a mayor.*

Organizational Structure

Worksheet – Organizational Structure

1. To be effective, an organization must have a _____ and be designed to meet a specific _____.
2. The six major stake holders who must be considered in the design of a utility organization are: _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____.
3. A good organizational structure makes clear each person's _____, gives each person only one _____ and keeps lines of authority and _____ as simple as possible.
4. The _____ is a drawing that shows the staff, the lines of _____ and the lines of communication.
5. Every utility has two components: the _____ and the utility _____.
6. The four policy making body models used in this course are: _____, _____, _____, and _____.
7. In the government model, the _____ acts as the policy making body for the utility.
8. The advantage of the strong utility board model over the advisory utility board model is that it provides more _____.
9. The _____ might be needed if there are _____ owners of the utility.
10. The three staff organization models discussed in this course are: _____, _____, and _____.
11. The model with the most focused staff roles is the _____.
12. Which staff model is chosen is mostly a function of _____ available and _____ that need to be done.
13. The organization of the utility and staff needs to be _____ regularly, preferably once a _____.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Organizational Structure

1. To be effective, an organization must have a clearly defined structure and be designed to meet a specific level of service.
2. The six major stake holders who must be considered in the design of a utility organization are: Customers, Policy Making Body, Utility manager, Utility clerk(s), Operator(s), Regulatory and funding agencies.
3. A good organizational structure makes clear each person's role, gives each person only one boss and keeps lines of authority and communication as simple as possible.
4. The organizational chart is a drawing that shows the staff, the lines of authority and the lines of communication.
5. Every utility has two components: the policy making body and the utility staff.
6. The four policy making body models used in this course are:
Government model
Advisory Utility Board model
Strong Utility Board model
Utility corporation model
7. In the government model, the local government acts as the policy making body for the utility.
8. The advantage of the strong utility board model over the advisory utility board model is that it provides more separation from local politics.
9. The corporation model might be needed if there are multiple owners of the utility.
10. The three staff organization models discussed in this course are:
Small government model
Operator/manager model
Manager model
11. The model with the most focused staff roles is the manager model.
12. Which staff model is chosen is mostly a function of personnel available and duties that need to be done.
13. The organization of the utility and staff needs to be reviewed regularly, preferably once a year.

Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability

Key Concepts to Teach

The relationship between Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability

Why Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability should be clearly spelled out for all stakeholders

How to assign Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability

Why there must be a parity between Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability for a given stakeholder

The importance of building flexibility into your chain of command

Using Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability to maintain separation between the utility and politics

Key Terms Students Should Know

Stakeholder

Role

Responsibility

Authority

Accountability

Chain of command (line of authority)

Line of communication

Delegation

Presentation Sequence

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Roles, Authority, Responsibilities & Accountability

Review :10

Roles...part 1 (1-6) :40

Overhead 2

Begin with a discussion of what Roles, Authority, Responsibilities and Accountability are and how they relate. Most of this is common sense so should go smoothly. However, since it underlies so much other material make certain that all of the students understand the concept.

Overheads 3-7

Each topic is treated separately here. There is quite a bit to explain in the bullet points here.

Roles...part 2 (8-13) :20

These examples and tips should prepare the students for the next exercise.

Worksheet and Action Notes :30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework :15

They should have already read the next lesson last night. If they have not, they will need to take part of their lunch break to do so.

Exercise Notes

Exercise 1 :30 Categorizing R,A,R,As

This exercise is not too taxing, but there are many things that the students may not have thought about, so go over some of the possibilities for multiple answers. Do the first couple as a class to make sure everyone knows what to do. Go over the answers after the students have had their time.

Exercises 2 :30 Job Description Re-Write

There are some gray areas in the current description. If they have extra time, they may re-write the job description on a fresh sheet. Some of the responsibilities are too general, one or more are too specific.

Exercise 3 :30 points to ponder

Roles, Authority, Responsibilities & Accountability

Give one or two questions to each group, or choose two or three to discuss as a class. These discussion questions can be done as a group exercise or interspersed throughout the lesson.

Exercise 1 Categorizing Roles, Authority, Responsibilities, & Accountability

Time needed: 30-40 minutes (20 to do questions, 10-20 for class review)

Materials needed: This page, pen.

Format: Individually.

Instructions: Analyze each of the items below & categorize as role, authority, responsibility or accountability. In the next column indicate which stake holder it belongs to. There may be more than one valid answer, especially for stakeholders (customer, policy making body, manager, operator, clerk, regulatory and funding agencies). You may abbreviate.

#	Item	Role, Authority, Responsibility or Accountability	Stakeholder(s)
1	Notify the utility if the service connection freezes up		
2	Do the daily residual chlorine test		
3	Use the products and services		
4	Can spend up to \$500 without board approval		
5	Service will be shut off if payment is not made in 30 days		
6	Manage the utility records		
7	Has priority use of the utility vehicle		
8	Provide feedback about what services are desired		
9	Fund construction of a new plant		
10	The utility must pay a \$200 fine for missing the asbestos test		
11	Decides rules and regulations for the utility		
12	Call past due accounts		
13	Can nominate board candidates		
14	Vote for board candidates		
15	Use the credit card to order spare parts by mail		
16	Be up for election every two years		
17	Prepare the annual budget		
18	Submit the water testing log to the DEC		
19	Enforce water quality standards		
20	Interview the top 3 candidates for operator position		
21	Help a customer fill out the agreement for service		
22	Run the sewage system		
23	Arrange for school tour of plant		
24	Given at least 10 min. to speak at each city council meeting		
25	Must answer questions at each city council meeting		

Exercise 1 ANSWER KEY

Categorizing Roles, Authority, Responsibilities, & Accountability

Some items fall into gray areas or have several valid answers; the best or several good answers are give

#	Item	Role, Authority, Responsibility or Accountability	Stakeholder(s)
1	Notify the utility if the service connection freezes up	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Customer</u>
2	Do the daily residual chlorine test	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Operator</u>
3	Use the products and services	<u>Role</u>	<u>Customer</u>
4	Can spend up to \$500 without board approval	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Manager, Oper., Clerk</u>
5	Service will be shut off if payment is not made in 30 days	<u>Accountability</u>	<u>Customer</u>
6	Manage the utility records	<u>Role, Responsibility</u>	<u>Agencies, Customer</u>
7	Has priority use of the utility vehicle	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Manager, Operator</u>
8	Provide feedback about what services are desired	<u>Role</u>	<u>Customer</u>
9	Fund construction of a new plant	<u>Role, Responsibility</u>	<u>Agencies, Customer</u>
10	The utility must pay a \$200 fine for missing the asbestos test	<u>Accountability</u>	<u>Policy Board, Manager</u>
11	Decides rules and regulations for the utility	<u>Role</u>	<u>Policy Board</u>
12	Call past due accounts	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Clerk</u>
13	Can nominate board candidates	<u>Authority</u>	<u>All</u>
14	Vote for board candidates	<u>Authority, Responsibility</u>	<u>Customer</u>
15	Use the credit card to order spare parts by mail	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Operator, Clerk</u>
16	Be up for election every two years	<u>Accountability</u>	<u>Policy Board</u>
17	Prepare the annual budget	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Manager, Policy board</u>
18	Submit the water testing log to the DEC	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Operator, Clerk</u>
19	Enforce water quality standards	<u>Role, Responsibility</u>	<u>Agencies</u>
20	Interview the top 3 candidates for operator position	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Manager, Policy Board</u>
21	Help a customer fill out the agreement for service	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Clerk</u>
22	Run the sewage system	<u>Responsibility, Role</u>	<u>Operator</u>
23	Arrange for school tour of plant	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Manager, Operator</u>
24	Given at least 10 min. to speak at each city council meeting	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Cust, Manager, Board</u>
25	Must answer questions at each city council meeting	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Manager, Policy Board</u>

Exercise 2 Job Description Re-Write

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Useful, colored pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 4-5.

Instructions: You are the Rural Utility Business Advisor (RUBA) assigned to help a manager of small utility whose clerk has just quit. You pull out the following job description and right away can see why she quit. Your task is to teach the manager how to write a better one using the RARA format. Mark up the current one as follows:

1. Cross off items that should not be in the job description at all.
2. Edit elements to make them appropriate, or add new ones.
3. Classify each remaining item as a role, authority, responsibility or accountability item. Write in the classification to the left of the item (you may abbreviate).

Job description for the _____ Utility Clerk

The pay rate shall be \$6.18 per hour.

The clerk shall perform the following:

1. Take applications for new service.
2. Make coffee each morning by 8:30 am.
3. Send monthly bills by the 25th of the month.
4. Call accounts that are more than 10 days overdue.
5. Fill out grant applications.
6. Handle all the record keeping for the utility.
7. Place the cash in the safe each day before leaving the office.
8. Check the level in the diesel tank every Wednesday.
9. File the customer agreements by last name in the bottom drawer of the gray file cabinet in the room behind the manager's office.
10. Answer all phone calls when the manager is not in.
11. Keep the records room clean and neat.
12. Prepare meeting agendas and minutes.
13. Take an inventory of spare parts every other Monday.
14. Give account to the policy making body of the time spent on which tasks.
15. Prepare the quarterly water usage forecast.
16. Grant or deny leave requests of the operator when the manager is not in.
17. File all reports.
18. Sketch out routes for new main lines.

Exercise 3 points to ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: copies of these discussion questions. Paper and pen for each group.

Format: groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1) What are some possible results of not writing out RARAs for all stake holders?

2) What happens when one person has more than one boss? Has this ever happened to you?

3) What authority should go along with the following new responsibilities:

a) File the customer information forms coming in from the recent expansion of the system. (they are different from the old ones).

b) Get the turbidity down by 25% and test the turbidity twice as often.

c) Instruction from the policy making body to finish painting the plant exterior by the time the grant committee gets here Friday. It's Tuesday, you are out of paint and have 20-25 more hours of painting for the temp hire to do.

Worksheet – Roles, Authority, Responsibilities & Accountability

1. The main players in a utility are called _____ because they have a _____ in the success or failure of the utility.
2. The six _____ identified in this course are:
_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____.
3. The overall position or purpose of a stake holder is called their _____.
4. The specific duties assigned to a stake holder are called _____ and must be consistent with the stated _____ of that stake holder.
5. When responsibilities are given, _____ must be given along with it.
6. Responsibility can be passed down the _____ but ultimate responsibility remains with the _____.
7. _____ is a means of making sure all responsibilities are fulfilled.
8. Customers are the _____ of the utility—that is their _____.
9. One of the customer's responsibilities is to provide _____ on what _____ of service they desire.
10. Goal setting is a responsibility of the _____.
11. The Utility manager receives authority from the _____.
12. Bookkeeping is part of the _____ role.
13. The operator is _____ to the manager for the fulfillment of his _____.
14. Enforcement of standards and giving assistance are roles typically taken on by _____.

Roles, Authority, Responsibilities & Accountability

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Roles, Authority, Responsibilities & Accountability

1. The main players in a utility are called stake holders because they have a stake in the success or failure of the utility.
2. The six stake holders identified in this course are

Customers

Policy making body

Manager

Clerk(s)

Operator(s)

Regulatory and funding agencies

3. The overall position or purpose of a stake holder is called their role.
4. The specific duties assigned to a stake holder are called responsibilities and must be consistent with the stated role of that stake holder.
5. When responsibilities are given, authority (to carry out the responsibility) must be given along with it.
6. Responsibility can be passed down the chain of command but ultimate responsibility remains with the supervisor.
7. Accountability is a means of making sure all responsibilities are fulfilled.
8. Customers are the owners of the utility—that is their role.
9. One of the customer's responsibilities is to provide guidance on what level of service they desire.
10. Goal setting is a responsibility of the policy making body.
11. The Utility manager receives authority from the policy making body.
12. Bookkeeping is part of the clerk's role.
13. The operator is accountable to the manager for the fulfillment of his responsibilities.
14. Enforcement of standards and giving assistance are roles typically taken on by outside agencies.

The Utility Ordinance I & II

Key Concepts to Teach

What is an ordinance?

Why have an ordinance?

How to adapt an ordinance to local situations

What goes into an ordinance?

How to keep an ordinance up to date

Key Terms Students Should Know

Ordinance

Severability

Service area

Notices

Discontinuance

Adequacy

Presentation Sequence – Part I

Timeline:

item	est time	finish time		

Review :10

Introduction (1-9) :50

This is a critical section since all activities and functions of the utility must be stated in the ordinance.

Utility Ordinance I & II

Overhead 2

Before going into what exactly is in an ordinance, spend the time necessary to explain what an ordinance is and what good it can do for a utility.

Overhead 3

This is also a good time to expose the students to some concepts relating to regulated utilities. Most may not foresee being regulated, but they may run across these terms. This will particularly important for the larger villages since there is often a push to move to regulation even if the utility is a nonprofit.

Start with a discussion of what being regulated means and what the advantages and disadvantages are. Then explain what a tariff is and how it is similar and different than an ordinance. Then explain what a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity is and when it is required.

Overhead 4

Some of the specific benefits of a good ordinance. Ask the students to try to think of a few more. Jot them down on the overhead or flip chart.

Overhead 5

Reminder of the legal nature of the ordinance and the need to have it reviewed, but hopefully not made unreadable, by an attorney.

Overheads 6-8

A fairly straightforward walk through the preliminary parts of the ordinance.

Overheads 9-10

Covering mostly things covered in the Organizational chapter. See if the students are comfortable with filling in some of the details amongst what they should already know.

Overhead 11-12

:15

Utility responsibilities come mostly out of the level of service lesson, plus some details. Overhead 11 is a reminder that while the ordinance binds the utility to providing a minimum level of service, it also frees it from any higher expectations.

Worksheet & Action Notes

:30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework

:15

The students should have already read the ordinance chapter in their manuals, but some may want to re-read it and the sample ordinance. Then they should read the *Customer Agreements* lesson.

Exercise Notes

see part 2

Presentation Sequence – Part II

Timeline:

item	est time	finish time		

Customer responsibilities & Operations (1-7) :45

Overhead 1-6

Continuation of the ordinance lesson with sections 5-8 of the sample ordinance. Customer responsibilities is the first of several sections that serve to protect the utility from abuse. But it also does a favor to the customer by delineating what the utility expects of them and warning them away from prohibited activities.

Utility Ordinance I & II

Overhead 8

Operations, in our sample ordinance, covers several important issues. Especially important are class of service and expansion issues both of which are hit upon in exercises.

Billings & utility protection (7-9) :20

Overheads 8-9

Notices, billings and discontinuance are probably the most frequently contentious issues for a utility. They need to be well covered in the ordinance

Overhead 10

These things are written into the ordinance for the utility's protection.

Worksheet & Action Notes :30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework :15

The students should have read the *Customer Agreements* lesson last night. If not, they will need to use part of their lunch hour to do so.

Exercise Notes

The exercises for both parts of the ordinance lesson are described here. They can be placed almost anywhere in the lesson after introducing the ordinance, however they are in an approximate order of complexity.

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------|---|
| Exercise 1 | :30 | Structuring a Utility
This exercise brings back organizational structure concepts from the previous day, then asks the students to outline them to be ready to place in an ordinance. |
| Exercise 2 | :45 | <i>Your</i> Utility Meets the Ordinance
This exercise may stretch some students, but it is really where the rubber meets the road. Give it the time and attention it needs. |
| Exercise 3 | :20 | points to ponder
As with the other discussion question exercises, use these as you see fit as exercise or sprinkle them throughout the lesson. |

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------|---|
| Exercise 4 | :40 | <p>Classes of Service</p> <p>The first part of this exercise is intended to probe the gray areas of classes of service. The second part will pose the challenge to carefully define the classes. There is no one right or wrong answer, the value is in the wrangling over it.</p> |
| Exercise 5 | :30 | <p>Expansion Issues</p> <p>These are the type of real-life situations the managers in this class may have to deal with.</p> |
| Exercise 6 | :20 | <p>points to ponder</p> <p>Give one or two questions to each group, or choose two or three to discuss as a class. These discussion questions can be done as a group exercise or interspersed throughout the lesson.</p> |
| Exercise 7 | 1:00 | <p>Collections</p> <p>Can be used anywhere in the lesson. The students should, by this time, be able to come up with a most of what is on the answer key. There are many possible good ideas however, many of which may not be on the answer key. There are many ways to collect past due amounts. The emphasis should be that the Utility needs to decide which is most appropriate/ acceptable in their community and give different circumstances.</p> <p>This is a good place to discuss how having written procedures (ordinances) and user agreements can help in the collection process</p> |
| Exercise 8 | :30 | <p>Billings</p> <p>This will not be an easy exercise for a fair number of students in the average class. A main benefit of the exercise is the practice at analyzing and evaluating written procedures.</p> |
| Exercise 9 | :40 | <p>Utility Responsibilities</p> <p>The two questions on this exercise probe the fine line between book knowledge and real life touch choices.</p> |

Exercise 1 Structuring a Utility

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: paper, pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 3-5, or can be done individually.

Setting: Your village is having a new piped water & sewer system installed. The city council wants to break off oversight of the utility to a separate board, but they are nervous about giving up the control. Since you were on the utility board in the village you previously lived in, they want your input.

Instructions: Choose a note taker/spokesman to report to the class. After figuring how you would structure the utility, draw it out on an organizational chart and add enough notes to make it clear to the layman. Note the advantages to the various stakeholders. Cover the points you will present to the city council and eventually need to put into the structure section of the ordinance you will probably end up writing.

Exercise 2 *Your Utility Meets the Ordinance*

Time needed: 40-50 minutes (depending on format used.)

Materials needed: Organizational chart started for *your* utility in the level of service exercise #2

Format: individually at first, then groups of 4-5 or as a whole class.

Instructions: Pull out your annotated organizational chart (see above). Address the question marks and exclamation marks you made indicating unknowns and problem sources respectively. Use all the concepts you've learned so far. Show where and how in the ordinance you could address these ambiguities and problems. When you have them written down, share them with the small group or class.

Exercise 3 points to ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions to groups: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1. Why should we put the draft ordinance out for public review? How is the general public going to know anywhere near as much as I do about running a utility?

2. We wrote our ordinance with one thought in mind: protecting the utility. We gave the barest minimum to the customer. After all give them an inch, they'll take a mile. Why don't you use ours a model?

3. We had a 10 page ordinance drafted and it came back from our attorney as a 25 page ordinance. What do we do now?

Exercise 4 Classes of Service

Time needed: 30-40 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 4-5.

Instructions: Discuss which of the following customers should be classified as residential, commercial, or another class such as school. Write down your reasons. What wording could you put in an ordinance that would help classify such users. Can you think of any other ways to ensure equitable treatment of these various customers?

1. Jerome Evans and his wife Sara live in three small dwellings all connected with hallways. They have eight children and Sara's mother and aunt live with them as well. One of the older children fixes snow machines in a shed during the winter and four wheelers during the summer.

2. Walter Ickes runs a small school to train village missionaries. At any one time he will have no more than three students in his building. Some of them sleep there and some at other homes around town.

3. Salmon Roe, Inc. is a three-person fish processing operation on the river. It uses twice as much water as anyone else in town, but does not use any sewer service because it has an OK to dump the fish entrails into the river.

4. Jane Smith lives alone but runs her screen printing business making T-shirts out of her home. She uses quite a bit of ink that must be flushed away.

5. Mr. & Mrs Chi run a B&B. They rent two rooms in their home and have a maximum of 4 guests. They usually only have guests during a 2 month period of the summer.

Exercise 5 Expansion Issues

Time needed: 30-40 minutes

Materials needed: Paper, pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 3-5.

Setting: You are on the policy making body of a village utility. The city council has been out courting businesses to locate in the village. Some have come and the village is growing. You will be meeting soon with the council to hammer out the new utility ordinance. Two expansion situations you are dealing with are shown below.

Instructions: How do you craft your new utility ordinance to keep the utility viable, without chasing away development? Write down things issues that need to be covered in the ordinance. How would you word them for an expansion of service section of an ordinance?

1. Six new houses are going in on the east end of town. You want to hook them up to your piped system so you can get the revenue. You have excess capacity right now anyway. The builder wants to opt out of the piped system so he does not have to go to the expense of hooking them up. He wants the new owners to pay for a haul system, which you would have to administer. The truth of the matter is another set of HUD houses will be going in on the far side of this builder next year and a main line will have to be put in. If the stubborn builder hooks in, it will spread the cost out for all.

2. A sea cucumber canning plant wants to locate on the west end of town. They want the city to extend the main line to them and hook them up at the utility's expense, and on top of that get a low flat rate on their water. After all, they say, they are bringing an industry to the town and will be paying their fair share of taxes. The council is eager to give them what they want to have them locate.

Exercise 6 points to ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1. What do you say to an elder living alone who is paying the same utility bill as her neighbor who has six kids, a bed-and-breakfast and a small snow machine repair shop in a shed?

2. Why not make each customer read and sign a copy of the full ordinance along with the agreement for service instead of the abbreviated customer responsibilities?

3. What benefit is it to the customer when the utility has an ordinance?

Exercise 7 COLLECTIONS

Time needed: 1:00

Materials needed: Case study questions, paper or flip chart pack or writing board, pens or markers.

Format: small groups.

Setting: Communities will usually have one or two collection strategies that they apply in all situations. Some strategies will work better in situations than other. This exercise is to try to think about how to apply different strategies.

Instructions:

1. Read the two collections situations, analyze them and respond to the questions after each.
2. You can either have each group deal with all four situations or assign situations to the different groups.
3. Allow 30 minutes for the groups to form their answers
4. Each group will report what they decided for each question(s). Write the answers for each question on the chart pack page.
5. Pass out the “answer” sheet.

Exercise 7 Collection Case Studies

Situation #1

The utility has a piped water/sewer system. The water system is a circulating loop system. When the original system was put in, no shut-off valves were installed for residential lines. 10 years later when the system was expanded, shut-off valves were installed on the new installations only. None of the residential customers have meters.

Several of the customers are past due in paying their bills. A couple of the Past due customers had shut-off valves, and the utility used them to turn off service. One of these customers complained that the utility cannot shut him off because “they aren’t turning everyone off” and it isn’t fair.

What can the utility do? What is some suggested wording or points that the Ordinance must address?

Situation #2

A apartment building with 4 units is connected to the water/sewer system. Currently the utility sends a bill to the occupant of each unit. Only two of the occupants are paying their bills. There is only one shut-off valve for the whole building.

What can be done to increase collections? What is some suggested wording or points that the Ordinance must address?

Exercise 7 Collection Case Studies (Answer Key)

Situation #1

The utility has a piped water/sewer system. The water system is a circulating loop system. When the original system was put in, no shut-off valves were installed for residential lines. 10 years later when the system was expanded, shut-off valves were installed on the new installations only. None of the residential customers have meters.

Several of the customers are past due in paying their bills. A couple of the Past Due customers had shut-off valves, and the utility used them to turn off service. One of these customers complained that the utility cannot shut him off because “they aren’t turning everyone off” and it isn’t fair.

What can the utility do? What is some suggested wording or points that the Ordinance must address?

It would be better to continue to use the shut-off valves on those customers that have them. The Utility needs to find an effective collection strategy/process to use on those without shut-off valves

You can cut off those without shut-off valves by digging down to the service connection point and installing a shutoff valve. It is then there for future use.

The ordinance should state that the utility recognizes this difference in customers and specifically address what collection process(es) will be used for each type of customer.

Situation #2

An apartment building with 4 units is connected to the water/sewer system. Currently the utility sends a bill to the occupant of each unit. Only two of the occupants are paying their bills. There is only one shut-off valve for the whole building.

What can be done to increase collections? What is some suggested wording or points that the Ordinance must address?

Make the owner of the building pay for the 4 units each month rather than bill each unit individually. The owner would then recover the cost by a rental increase.

The ordinance needs to specifically state that multi-family housing (and define this term in the definitions section) will be billed to the owner of the facility for all units, and that it is the owner of the facility that is responsible for payment, not the individual tenants.

Exercise 8 Billing Procedures

Time needed: :30

Materials needed: for groups: flip chart pack or writing board, pens or markers.

Format: small groups, or individually.

Setting: The City of Ptarmigan Pass has the billing policy shown below.

Instructions:

1. Read and analyze the Billing Policy. If in a small group, discuss it with the of the group.
2. Answer this question: **Do you see anything in this procedure that you would change?**
3. Someone in the group should be prepared to share the findings with the class.
4. Compare your ideas with the “answer” sheet.

A. **Monthly Bills:** All bills will be mailed on or before the end of each month. The bill will contain a statement of present charges due, including the billing for the following month. All bills are due by the 20th of the following month.

B. **Past due Bills:** All bills not paid by the 20th of the following month of billing will be considered past due.

C. **Past due Notice:** A Past Due Notice shall be mailed to each customer whose account is more than 30 days past.

D. **Water Shut-off Notice:** After a utility bill has been unpaid for a 30 days after the Past Due Notice, the Utility shall send a Water Turn-off Notice to the customer, stating the date and time at which the service may be terminated. The Utility may not terminate the service sooner than 15 days from the date that the notice is sent. The notice shall be sent to the customer by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. If the receipt has not been received in the Utility office within 15 days of mailing, notice shall be made by a Utility employee or agent, delivering or posting notice, at the customer’s residence or place of business. The Utility may terminate the service at any time after the date and time indicated in the turn-off notice without further notification, unless written payment arrangements are made by the customer and approved by the Utility Board. The Utility Board reserves the right to reject offers of payment that are for less than the full amount due. The Utility Board also reserves the right to waive the rules for shut-off due to non-payment in the interest of the customer when there is compelling reason to do so. The utility, for safety issues, may not terminate a customer’s water service from October 15 - May 15 of each year.

E. **Deposit for Reconnection:** In all cases if service has been disconnected due to non-payment of bills, the customer must again meet the security deposit requirements set forth above before service will be reconnected.

F. **Responsibility for Payment of Utility Bills:** In all cases the person signing the utility application form is responsible for the utility bills regardless of who owns the property served.

Exercise 8 ANSWER KEY Billing Procedures

The City of Ptarmigan Pass billing policy

A. **Monthly Bills:** All bills will be mailed on or before the end of each month. The bill will contain a statement of present charges due, including the billing for the following month. All bills are due by the 20th of the following month.

B. **Past due Bills:** All bills not paid by the 20th of the following month of billing will be considered past due.

C. **Past due Notice:** A Past Due Notice shall be mailed to each customer whose account is more than 30 days past.

D. **Water Shut-off Notice:** If a utility bill has been unpaid within 30 days of the Past Due Notice being issued, the Utility shall send a Water Turn-off Notice to the customer, stating the date and time at which the service may be terminated. The Utility may not terminate the service sooner than 15 days from the date that the notice is sent. The notice shall be sent to the customer by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested. If the receipt has not been received in the Utility office within 15 days of mailing, notice shall be made by a Utility employee or agent, delivering or posting notice, at the customer's residence or place of business. The Utility may terminate the service at any time after the date and time indicated in the turn-off notice without further notification, unless written payment arrangements are made by the customer and approved by the Utility Board. The Utility Board reserves the right to reject offers of payment that are for less than the full amount due. The Utility Board also reserves the right to waive the rules for shut-off due to non-payment in the interest of the customer when there is compelling reason to do so. The utility, for safety issues, may not terminate a customer's water service from October 15 - May 15 of each year.

E. **Deposit for Reconnection:** In all cases if service has been disconnected due to non-payment of bills, the customer must again meet the security deposit requirements set forth above before service will be reconnected.

F. **Responsibility for Payment of Utility Bills:** In all cases the person signing the utility application form is responsible for the utility bills regardless of who owns the property served.

Do you see anything in this procedure that you would change?

Lets map out this process. The bill for May is sent out by April 20th. It is due by May 20th. A Past Due Notice is sent out on June 20th. A disconnection notice is sent out July 20th. The Utility can disconnect on August 5th.

So as the when the utility finally goes to disconnect the person owes for May, June, July, and part of August. They are already 3.5 months behind. This is a problem.

Since the utility has a further restriction of not turning off any water service between October 15 to May 15, then any customer not paying their August bill, cannot be disconnected until May 15th of the following year.

Collection agencies have shown that any bill over 90 days past due has a 50% or less collection rate. The steps above allow for a 75 day period to pass. This is too long.

Exercise 9 Utility Responsibility

Time needed: :40

Materials needed: for groups: flip chart pack or writing board, pens or markers.

Format: small groups, or individually.

Setting: Two situations provide challenging exploration into real life complications of concepts learned in this course

Instructions: Read over the situations and answer the questions following each.

Situation #1

The utility has a piped water/sewer system with 100 connections. All water connections are metered. The water meters are located where the customer's line connects to the main line (curb stop).

It has been a common problem (4-5 times a year) with this system since it was built, that during extreme cold, water lines will freeze, starting at the meter, and running towards the customer's house. In the past, the city has always paid the cost of fixing these freeze-ups. You are the manager who has returned from attended a utility management training workshop. One of the things that you learned in the workshop was about customer agreements. You have decided to implement these agreements. While drafting the agreement, you write that the customer is responsible for any maintenance and repair of lines, plumbing and fixtures from the curb stop. Just then, Joe comes in and says his line has frozen. You look at what you have just written, then look at Joe.

Do you really want to put in the agreement what you just wrote? What are the consequences to the customers? What affect will this have on the utility?

Situation #2

Your utility operates a flush haul system. One problem in the past has been drifts of snow blocking the access to the units. The utility board has requested that you look at the options and give them a recommendation on whether the utility or customer should be responsible for removing the drifts.

What are the pros and cons of it being the utility's responsibility?

What are the pros and cons of it being the customer's responsibility?

Exercise 9 Utility Responsibility (Situation 1 Answer)

Situation #1

The utility has a piped water/sewer system with 100 connections. All water connections are metered. The water meters are located where the customer's line connects to the main line (curb stop).

It has been a common problem (4-5 times a year) with this system since it was built, that during extreme cold, water lines will freeze, starting at the meter, and running towards the customer's house. In the past, the city has always paid the cost of fixing these freeze-ups. You are the manager who has returned from attending a utility management training workshop. One of the things that you learned in the workshop was about customer agreements. You have decided to implement these agreements. While drafting the agreement, you write that the customer is responsible for any maintenance and repair of lines, plumbing and fixtures from the curb stop. Just then, Joe comes in and says his line has frozen. You look at what you have just written, then look at Joe.

Do you really want to put in the agreement what you just wrote? What are the consequences to the customers? What affect will this have on the utility?

Yes, you would still want to leave the wording in the agreement. You do not want to change the wording since it will make the customer responsible for the system on their property. BUT, since the freeze-ups happen quite often, and it appears to be a design flaw, that the customer can do nothing to correct, you will probably want to make a special exemption to freeze-up repairs that occur within 5 feet of the curb stop. This wording should be approved by the council and placed in the customer agreement.

Exercise 9 Utility Responsibility (Situation 2 Answer)

Situation #2

Your utility operates a flush haul system. One problem in the past has been drifts of snow blocking the access to the units. The utility board has requested that you look at the options and give them a recommendation on whether the utility or customer should be responsible for removing the drifts.

What are the pros and cons of it being the utility's responsibility?

What are the pros and cons of it being the customer's responsibility?

- Pros**
- There is a higher level of service provided.
 - It will cost the community as a whole less to do the snow removal since one person doing it will be more efficient.
 - It will probably be done in a better manner, if customers remove snow, they do not always do an adequate job.
- Cons**
- It will cost the utility quite a bit more money, which will have to be absorbed in the rates.
 - Not all customers need snow removal, so those that don't will have to pay part of the cost of those that do.

What are the pros and cons of it being the customer's responsibility?

- Pros**
- Customers can control their own costs. They can remove the snow themselves, or they can pay somebody to do it.
 - Could generate new jobs for people in the community (kids?)
 - Those customers that do not have a drifting problem will not have to pay anything.
- The additional revenue will help pay the cost of maintaining existing heavy equipment.
- Cons**
- Some customers may not be physically able to remove the snow or financially able to pay to have it removed.
 - The utility will have to set some standards as to when snow removal must be done, and how well it must be done.
 - If the Utility offers it as a separate service, it is one more bill that it must track, bill and collect.

Utility Ordinance I & II

Worksheet – Utility Ordinance1

- 1.The Utility ordinance is your link with your _____ and your _____
_____.
- 2.It is also outlines your _____ and _____ relationship with your customers.
- 3.Your ordinance should cover your utility's particular situations but still be _____ and _____ by all stakeholders.
- 4.The ordinance must be reviewed by the utility's _____ before it is placed into the public comment and adoption process.
- 5.The _____ section defines words as they are used in the ordinance.
- 6.Paragraphs about purpose, ownership and philosophy of the utility serve to set the _____ for what follows.
- 7.When listing staff responsibilities in the ordinance, don't get too_____.
- 8.The Utility responsibilities listed in the ordinance are describing your _____
_____.
- 9.The utility's responsibilities set a _____ level of service to be provided...You're only _____ up to that level.
- 10.The quantity and reliability of service is often called _____.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Utility Ordinance1

1. The Utility ordinance is your link with your customers and your policy making body.
2. It is also outlines your legal and financial relationship with your customers.
3. Your ordinance should cover your utility's particular situations but still be clear and readable by all stakeholders.
4. The ordinance must be reviewed by the utility's legal counsel before it is placed into the public comment and adoption process.
5. The definitions section defines words as they are used in the ordinance.
6. Paragraphs about purpose, ownership and philosophy of the utility serve to set the stage (or scene or tone, etc.) for what follows.
7. When listing staff responsibilities in the ordinance, don't get too specific.
8. The Utility responsibilities listed in the ordinance are describing your level of service.
9. The utility's responsibilities set a minimum level of service to be provided...You're only obligated up to that level.
10. The quantity and reliability of service is often called adequacy.

Worksheet – Utility Ordinance 2

1. The _____ section tells people what is expected of them.
2. The customer's responsibilities should be listed as _____ as possible in the ordinance and in a _____ version in the *Agreement for Service*.
3. One of the most obvious customer responsibilities is to _____ for services received.
4. Residential and commercial are examples of _____.
5. The Utility should reserve the right to place a _____ on any connection.
6. The actual rates don't have to be in the ordinance, but it should say _____.
7. Procedures for _____ a customer had better be clear and fair to avoid disputes.
8. Make sure the billing and _____ rules are firm enough to allow forcing payment but _____ enough to allow forgiveness when it is appropriate.
9. The _____ of utility plants, pipes, meters and other equipment help the utility maintain its _____.
10. Encourage the public to _____ its utility equipment, but write protection in the ordinance in case they don't.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Utility Ordinance 2

1. The Customer Responsibilities section tells people what is expected of them.
2. The customer's responsibilities should be listed as comprehensively as possible in the ordinance and in a simplified version in the *Agreement for Service*.
3. One of the most obvious customer responsibilities is to pay for services received.
4. Residential and commercial are examples of classes of service.
5. The Utility should reserve the right to place a water meter on any connection.
6. The actual rates don't have to be in the ordinance, but it should say where they are found.
7. Procedures for disconnecting a customer had better be clear and fair to avoid disputes.
8. Make sure the billing and collection rules are firm enough to allow forcing payment but flexible enough to allow forgiveness when it is appropriate.
9. The quality of utility plants, pipes, meters and other equipment help the utility maintain its level of service.
10. Encourage the public to take care of its utility equipment, but write protection in the ordinance in case they don't.

Customer Agreements

Key Concepts to Teach

Why have customer agreements

What are the legalities with regard to customer agreements

What should be in a customer agreement

Key Terms Students Should Know

Easement

Right of entry

Legal description

Acknowledgement

Presentation Sequence

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Review :10

Overhead 2 :10

Customer agreements might seem a little dry...and they are. But they are also very important. Overhead 1 gives the basics including two benefits of using customer agreements.

Drafting Agreements :45

Overheads 3-4

The two main agreements are briefly described, then the four more which may go with one of the other main agreements. The differences between the *Application for Connection* and the *Agreement for Service* can be tricky for some not to mention the additional forms. Take the time to make sure everyone is following before going on.

Overheads 5-9

More detail on the two main agreements.

Overhead 10

Tips for writing customer agreements

Worksheet & Action Notes :30

Handle any lingering questions or loose ends, then give the students time to do or finish their worksheets. After completing the worksheet, each student should write notes in the action items area at the end of the lesson. These notes are ideas that might need more study or implementation at their utility. They may need to skim over the lesson and any notes that were taken. These action items will be refined later.

Wrap-up & Homework :20

Assign the communication and administration sections. The record keeping section is long if you consider the useful record keeping model in the appendix. It will be something they can refer back to, so they don't need to try to memorize the many details.

Exercise Notes

Exercise 1 :20

Big Brother's Contracts

This exercise gives the students an eye-opener about some of the touchy issues with regards to agreements.

Exercise 2 :30

School Agreement

This exercise takes off where #1 left off. It focuses more on a why and

how a commercial customer needs an agreement.

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------|---|
| Exercise 3 | :30 | Analyze a Customer Agreement
This checklist makes an easy way to examine agreements for various components. |
| Exercise 4 | :25 | Points to Ponder
As with the other discussion question exercises, use these as a group exercise or interspersed through the lesson. |

Exercise 1 Big Brother's Contracts

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper, pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 4-5 or can be done individually.

Setting: You are the manager of a small village utility. You come back from a management training course where you learned how good it is to have customer agreements. You promptly send an agreement to every customer asking them to sign and return ASAP. Two come back signed. Dozens of other people storm your office or stop you on the street accusing you of red tape proliferation, big brother politics and worse. The school sends back a letter saying they have had a verbal agreement for 5 years so why do they need a written one now.

Instructions: You are preparing to write an open letter to the residents to smooth things over. You want to try to show them that the signed agreements are not that bad and how they might help them out in the future.

Outline the main points of your letter. Look them over to make sure you are not putting your foot in your mouth again.

What other tactics might you take with this problem?

Pick a note taker and spokesman for reporting your ideas to the class.

Exercise 2 School Agreement

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper, pen or pencil.

Format: groups of 4-5.

Setting: As in the previous exercise, “You are the manager of a small village utility. You come back from a management training course where you learned how good it is to have customer agreements. You promptly send an agreement to every customer asking them to sign and return ASAP. Two come back signed. Dozens of other people storm your office or stop you on the street accusing you of red tape proliferation, big brother politics and worse. The school sends back a letter saying they have had a verbal agreement for 5 years so why do they need a written one now.”

After your open letter to the village in the last exercise, you turn your attention to the school.

Instructions: What points can you make to the school explaining why a written contract might be good for them. Sweeten the pot by offering a little something more for signing a contract. Would a long or short term contract be better? What other ideas might you come up with for this situation?

Pick a note taker and spokesman for reporting your ideas to the class.

Exercise 3 - Analyze a Customer Agreement

Time needed: 30 minutes

Materials needed: pen or pencil and this sheet.

Format: individually or groups of 3-5.

Instructions: Choose a note taker and spokesman.

Discuss the Customer Agreement(s) you were given. Use the check sheet and the information from this chapter to analyze the Agreement

Take notes on any problems or changes these Agreements may need.

At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

User Agreement Assessment Form

Does your **application for connection** contain these items?

Item	Yes	No
1. A description of what work that will be performed in order to make the service connection: the types of materials to be used, and who will be performing the work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A statement of who is responsible for paying the cost of material and labor for making the connection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Signatures of the customer and the utility representative that they have read, understood, and agree to the contents of the agreement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Copies of any Easements (if necessary) that need to be signed to provide the Utility Site control for main water/sewer lines, access for deliver/haul vehicles, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. If the Utility is doing the work, signed Right-of-Entry permits to allow the utility workers to legally enter the property.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Construction specifications for connecting to the utility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does your **agreement for service** contain these items?

Item	Yes	No
1. A description of the responsibilities of the customer including, maintaining the plumbing and fixtures in their property, agreeing to pay for service, working with the utility during times of emergencies to effect repairs or conserve water, allowing utility personnel to inspect the parts of the system on the applicants property, and not to resell water.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The responsibilities of the utility including: providing potable water and/or safe sewage		

- disposal, billing customers on a published schedule, providing reasonable access to the utility operations records. ☐ ☐
3. Explanation of collections procedures for past due accounts. ☐ ☐
4. Information about the customer needed by the utility to assist if collection actions should be necessary. ☐ ☐
5. Signatures of the customer and the utility representative that they have read, understood, and agree to the contents of the agreement. ☐ ☐
6. Separate document showing rates and charges. ☐ ☐

Exercise 4 Points to Ponder

Time needed: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pen for each group.

Format: Break into groups of 3-4, or simply discuss as a class

Instructions: Choose a spokesman/notetaker. Discuss the question(s) you are given. At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class what the question was and what ideas you came up with.

1. Wouldn't keeping the peace be worth going without a written agreement for existing customers who have never been under a written agreement?

2. What are the benefits and dangers of making special deals with key commercial customers?

3. What are some ways a utility can increase its level of service in an area as boring as customer agreements.

4. After five years you stumble across the fact that the description and map for an easement across private property for a water main shows the main to be 10 feet south of where it really is, which is still on the private property. Is it worth the time, trouble, money and embarrassment to have it re-located and signed by all parties?

Worksheet – Customer Agreements

1. Customer agreements are forms that set someone up as a _____ and obligate them to pay their bill and follow the _____.
2. Customer agreements are _____ documents just as the ordinance is.
3. The two basic agreements are:

_____.
4. Application for _____ is used for those wishing to receive the utility's service but are not currently _____.
5. _____ for Service is required of everyone with a _____, whether new or existing.
6. These two agreements are often supplemented by one or more of the following:
Legal _____ of property, _____ Rights of _____ to property, or _____ across private property.
7. _____ forms to have notarized.
8. Specifying who does what work and for how much in making a connections is an important part of the _____.
9. The utility is not obligated to _____ every Application for Service—it can deny requests based on criterion listed in the _____.
10. The Agreement for Service contains a simplified list of _____.
11. A _____ agreement allows utility personnel to go onto your property—in your house even—to plan public works.
12. An _____ allows the utility to have pipes remain on a certain portion of your property.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Customer Agreements

1. Customer agreements are forms that set someone up as a customer and obligate them to pay their bill and follow the ordinance (rules, etc.).
2. Customer agreements are legal documents just as the ordinance is.
3. The two basic agreements are:
Application for Connection
Agreement for Service.
4. Application for Connection is used for those wishing to receive the utility's service but are not currently connected.
5. Agreement for Service is required of everyone with a connection, whether new or existing.
6. These two agreements are often supplemented by one or more of the following:
Legal Descriptions of property
Rights of Entry to property
Easements across private property.
7. Acknowledgment forms to have notarized.
8. Specifying who does what work and for how much in making a connections is an important part of the Application for service.
9. The utility is not obligated to honor (fulfill etc.) every Application for Service—it can deny requests based on criterion listed in the ordinance.
10. The Agreement for Service contains a simplified list of customer responsibilities.
11. A Right of Entry agreement allows utility personnel to go onto your property—in your house even—to plan public works.
12. An easement allows the utility to have pipes remain on a certain portion of your property.

Communication/Administration & wrap up

Key Concepts to Teach

Why public relations is important
What constitutes a good public relations campaign
Who should you concentrate on
What is work space management
How and how long do you keep records
What are the legal requirements for record keeping

Key Terms Students Should Know

Public relations
Deeds
Titles
Easements

Presentation Notes

Time line:

item	est time	finish time		

Because of the intensity of the class over the previous days, you should expect a certain amount of burn-out. Fortunately, the lightest class is last.

There are several shorter topics to cover, so keep an eye on the clock and be flexible. No one likes to be held over on the last day. Also, some students might have tight flight schedules.

Review :10

Public Relations (1-4) :20

Stress that PR does not have to be expensive, but can pay off big. It is almost a required in today's world.

Work Space Management (5-7) :10

Most managers are not going to have the luxury of re-structuring the space they have, and many will not have nearly as much as the ideals given in the student manual. Nevertheless, they can gain some good principles for using their space as efficiently as possible.

Record Keeping (8-10) :15

The short amount of time to cover this will just be an awareness exposure to the concept of a highly organized record keeping system. The Student Manual contains quite a bit of detail on this system.

Worksheets :20

Conclusion & review :25

Spend about 20 minutes going over the outline and hitting the high points and any important points you think were not sinking in well. Leave some time for last minute questions.

Post test :35

When all the learning is done (for the moment) give the post test and collect it. If its possible for one of the instructors to start tabulating immediately, the results might be ready before the course is out.

Action Plans :30

Action plans need to outline the steps students will take to implement what they learned when they get back to their own utility. Have them go through the action notes they took at the end of each lesson and compile and refine them into the action plan. Make sure they are specific and have timelines included. Make sure they don't try to do everything at once—the plan should be *attainable*. Emphasize how the time spent taking the course will have been wasted if they do not put these principles into action.

Wrap-up :20

It is recommended that the instructors give some kind of fun completion

awards to the students to keep the atmosphere light and supportive. Also pass out the list of students' and instructors' contact information so all can keep in touch.

Exercise Notes:

- | | | |
|--|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Exercise 1 | :20 | Brainstorming PR |
| <p>Explain the concept of brainstorming: generate as many ideas as possible for later evaluation. No one should criticize or analyze any idea. If someone could combine the ideas onto one legible sheet and make copies for all the managers to take home, they can probably make use of some of them.</p> | | |
| Exercise 2 | :20 | Press Release/Meeting Poster |
| <p>The main idea is to reinforce the idea of getting started on PR and that it's not so hard. Writing a press release might be a little intimidating for many of the students. The poster option might be for them.</p> <p>Don't let the writers get caught up in formatting the release for a newspaper or whatever. The content is what is important here, and style to some extent.</p> | | |
| Exercise 3 | :15 | Workplace Assessment |
| <p>A checkoff list to evaluate the student's home facility. This will get them thinking about ways to make it more efficient.</p> | | |
| Exercise 4 | :20 | Record Filing Types |
| <p>Handling paperwork is not a fun task. Learning to efficiently take care of it means less time spent doing it and then searching for things later because they were not filed properly. It should not take more than about 10 minutes for the students to go through the list of papers to file, then the balance can be used to discuss related topics.</p> | | |

Exercise 1 Brainstorming PR

Time needed: 15-25 minutes

Materials needed: flip chart, blackboard or blank overhead transparency.

Format: whole class or groups of 5-6.

Instructions: Choose a spokesperson and notetaker.

Brainstorm public relations ideas as a group and have the notetaker write down all the ideas. Remember, brainstorming involves only writing down any ideas generated, not trying to evaluate them. Let the creativity flow, springing off one idea to another.

At the end of the allotted time, the spokesman will report to the class. There will be a lot of overlap between the groups, but some unique ideas will come out that all can use.

Exercise 2 Press Release/Meeting Poster

Time needed: 10-15 minutes

Materials needed: Paper, pen or pencil.

Format: Individually.

Instructions: You are working on your utility's public image. Choose one of these projects as a practice for communicating to your shareholders:

Press release

Write a press release to send to the regional radio station and newspaper outlining three things your utility is doing to make it "more responsive to the customer's needs."

Be prepared to read your release to the class.

Meeting poster

The Council is having a public meeting in two weeks to inform the public of changes to the system and new rates. Make a poster advertising the public hearing to be put up in various building throughout town.

Exercise 3 - Workplace Assessment

Use the following Workplace Assessment to review your Utility workplaces and determine what changes you may need to make your workplace more efficient.

Workplace Assessment Form

Criteria	OK	Needs Changes	Action Item
General			
Neat and organized	_____	_____	_____
Ability to be cleaned	_____	_____	_____
Minimum cost of heating	_____	_____	_____
Secure from vandals	_____	_____	_____
Adequate ventilation	_____	_____	_____
Adequate lighting	_____	_____	_____
Office			
Enough room for staff	_____	_____	_____
Enough room to effectively use equipment	_____	_____	_____
Customer eye contact minimized	_____	_____	_____
Coffee pot & phones out of direct sight & hearing of staff	_____	_____	_____
Customer Area			
Observable by the office staff	_____	_____	_____
Separate area	_____	_____	_____
Separate enough for the customer to feel some level of privacy	_____	_____	_____
Confidential office space for handling delicate customer problems	_____	_____	_____
Waiting space	_____	_____	_____
Operational Facilities			
Spare parts space	_____	_____	_____
Chemical space	_____	_____	_____
Tools space	_____	_____	_____
Equipment space	_____	_____	_____
Spaces secure	_____	_____	_____
Paper work	_____	_____	_____
Testing	_____	_____	_____
Operational records storage	_____	_____	_____

Communication & Administration

Exercise 4 - Record Filing Types

Instructions :

Review this list of items and determine if they should be kept and what section of your filing system they should be filed in.

Document	Legal	Financial	Management	Operations	Toss out
Recently passed ordinance					
Next year's budget					
O & M manual from the L.M.I. pump vendor					
Vendor list from PHS					
Map of new collection system lines					
Blueprint of washeteria					
Original of water right certificate					
Letter from Fish & Game responding to your request to remove gravel from a stream					
Operator certification certificate					
Phone message from Scott Ruby at DCRA					
Vendor advertisement on a leadership class in Anchorage					
Customer complaint letter					
Copy of grant application for VSW forms					
Box of updates of the AAC from Buterworth Company					
Envelope from Publisher's Clearing House stating you may be the next \$10,000,000,000 dollar winner					
A notice from the State Department of Labor saying that your employer ESC rate has been adjusted up to 3.35%					
Report by US Fish and Wildlife Service on a recent study in a nearby Wildlife Refuge					
Packet and registration form from the Alaska Municipal League about the annual conference.					
DEC Sanitary Survey					

Exercise 4 - Record Filing Types

Answer Key

Document	Category
Recently passed ordinance	Legal
Next year's budget ment - Operations	Financial - Manage-
O & M manual from the L.M.I. pump vendor	Operations
Vendor list from PHS Financial - Management	Operations –
Map of new collection system lines	Operations
Blueprint of washeteria	Operations
Original of water right certificate	Legal
Letter from Fish & Game responding to your request to remove gravel from a stream	Legal – Operations
Operator certification certificate	Operations
Phone message from Scott Ruby at DCRA	Place on To-do-list
Vendor advertisement on a leadership class in Anchorage	Respond or toss out
Customer complaint letter	Respond
Copy of grant application for VSW forms	Management
Box of updates of the AAC from Buterworth Company	Legal
Envelope from Publisher's Clearing House stating you may be the next \$10,000,000,000 dollar winner	Toss out!
A notice from the State Department of Labor saying that your employer ESC rate has been adjusted up to 3.35%	Financial
Report by US Fish and Wildlife Service on a recent study in a nearby Wildlife Refuge	Operations
Packet of information from the Alaska Municipal League stating when/where the annual conference will be. Includes a registration form.	Management
DEC Sanitary Survey	Management

Worksheet – Communication & Administration

1. The goal of Public Relations (PR) is to _____ for the utility.
2. A good PR program can pay for itself with: better _____, fewer _____ and _____ future projects.
3. The best PR program starts with a _____
4. Its best to be _____, not wait until you have a _____ on your hands.
5. Workers are safer, more _____, and more _____ when they have the proper _____ and _____ to do their job.
6. Avoid _____ in one area due to _____ flow or activity in another space.
7. A systematic approach to record keeping is needed to _____, and _____.
8. A record keeping system needs to have these four aspects: _____, _____, _____ and _____.
9. Four categories of records that must be managed are _____ _____ and _____.

Worksheet ANSWER KEY– Communication & Administration

1. The goal of Public Relations (PR) is to build support for the utility.
2. A good PR program can pay for itself with: better collections, fewer customer problems and support for future projects.
3. The best PR program starts with a truly good product and service.
4. Its best to be proactive, not wait until you have a crisis (problem etc.) on your hands.
5. Workers are safer, more efficient, and more satisfied, when they have the proper tools and space to do their job.
6. Avoid disruptions in one area due to traffic flow or activity in another space.
7. A systematic approach to record keeping is needed to prevent loss, and allow access.
8. A record keeping system needs to have these four aspects: storage, retrieval, analysis and disposal.
9. Four categories of records that must be managed are financial, operational, managerial and legal.

Pre- and Post-Course Tests

Name _____

Instructions: circle the best one answer from the lettered phrases. On matching questions, write in the answer.

1. Level of service means
 - a) what products and services are delivered to customers.
 - b) how good the customer service is.
 - c) the quality of the products delivered.
 - d) all of the above.
2. The best way to handle legitimate customer complaints is to
 - a) pass them on to the policy making body.
 - b) handle them as soon as possible.
 - c) require that they be made in writing.
 - d) wait one week since 80% of complaints will be dropped.
3. The largest segment of operations and maintenance costs is usually
 - a) chemicals.
 - b) labor.
 - c) travel.
 - d) plant replacement.
4. Grants usually only pay for
 - a) original construction costs of a utility.
 - b) operations and maintenance.
 - c) hiring a manager.
 - d) powdered chlorination and not liquid.
5. The policy making body of the utility should meet at least
 - a) once a year.
 - b) once a month.
 - c) once a week.
 - d) whenever business comes up.

6. Which of the following must be written in the ordinance?
 - a) Procedures for collecting late bills.
 - b) The operator's salary.
 - c) The utility's office hours.
 - d) All of the above.
7. O&M stands for
 - a) Office & Managerial.
 - b) Overhead & Materials.
 - c) Operations & Maintenance.
 - d) Overview & Miscellaneous.
8. Who is responsible for drafting a long term plan for the utility?
 - a) utility manager.
 - b) utility clerk.
 - c) utility operator.
 - d) policy making body.
9. The best way to track water loss is to
 - a) put dye in the water to spot any leaks.
 - b) install meters.
 - c) shut down one main line at a time to isolate the loss.
 - d) increase the water pressure until the loss becomes obvious.
10. Whenever the level of service is raised
 - a) customers will complain.
 - b) the cost of the service will usually increase
 - c) the cost of the service will usually decrease
 - d) the cost of service is not affected.
11. A person's responsibilities are:
 - a) negotiable at the start of each month.
 - b) his/her specific duties within the organization.
 - c) the same as their role.
 - d) all of the above.

12. Which of the following is a typical class of service for a small utility:
- a) commercial.
 - b) residential.
 - c) school.
 - d) all of the above.
13. Billing utility customers must be done
- a) on any workable, set schedule.
 - b) separately for water and for sewer.
 - c) monthly.
 - d) all of the above.
14. Public relations
- a) is only cost effective for utilities in cities over 10,000 population.
 - b) is only needed when there are problems with the service.
 - c) is a combination of education and plain promotion.
 - d) only works in the schools.
15. Maintaining a minimum water pressure and water flow meets a requirement called
- a) psi.
 - b) adequacy.
 - c) volume specification.
 - d) Uniform Plumbing Code.
16. In a city-owned utility, utility funds should be kept
- a) in a bank the city owns stock in.
 - b) in the general fund of the city.
 - c) in a separate account from the city.
 - d) in the same account as the city but kept separate on paper.
17. Being held accountable means
- a) keeping the books.
 - b) being responsible for setting the rates for the level of service.
 - c) being made to answer for a certain task or function.
 - d) the person who will get blamed if anything goes wrong.

18. If a utility wishes to isolate itself from city politics the best structure listed is
- a) advisory utility board model.
 - b) strong utility board model.
 - c) the exopolitico model.
 - d) it doesn't make any difference.
19. An organizational chart shows
- a) each person's immediate supervisor.
 - b) each person's subordinates.
 - c) lines of authority and communication.
 - d) all of the above.
20. Who determines level of service issues?
- a) Whoever paid for the initial construction.
 - b) The State of Alaska.
 - c) The customers.
 - d) The manager.
21. The term enterprise means
- a) running the utility like a business.
 - b) seeking to cover expenses through user fees.
 - c) taking cost into consideration in decisions.
 - d) all of the above.
22. When adding new facilities to serve a specific property, funding should come from:
- a) the community as a whole.
 - b) the sale of bonds.
 - c) the new customer.
 - d) state or federal grants.
23. Service lines on private property are owned by
- a) the property owner.
 - b) the utility.
 - c) the city.
 - d) all parties jointly.

24. Customers exert their influence when they vote for
 - a) changes in rates and charges.
 - b) the policy making body.
 - c) the utility manager.
 - d) the customer representative to the policy making body.
25. Rates and charges are set by the
 - a) policy making body.
 - b) rates and charges commission.
 - c) the clerk.
 - d) none of the above.
26. Which of these is considered a legal document:
 - a) the utility ordinance.
 - b) the customer agreement.
 - c) all of the above.
 - d) none of the above.
27. The utility ordinance is
 - a) a law passed by the local governing body.
 - b) the charter of the utility drawn up by the building committee.
 - c) a law passed by the state legislature.
 - d) the customer's demands to the utility.

For the following 8 problems, match a definition on the right with the term on the left.

28. Past due account ____ a) the quality and quantity of products and service offered.
29. Capital ____ b) an organization operated in a business-like fashion.
30. Level of Service ____ c) money or anything of significant value that the utility owns.
31. Rate of return ____ d) what the utility earns compared with what goes out.
32. Stakeholder ____ e) the power to carry out tasks.
33. Authority ____ f) a document allowing the utility to leave water or sewer line or related equipment onto another's property.
34. easement ____ g) a late bill.

35. enterprise ____h) someone with a vested interest in the utility.
36. When should you have an easement in a customer agreement?
- a) when utility-owned pipes cross private property.
 - b) always.
 - c) when the customer requests it.
 - d) when your attorney requires it.
37. If the utility knocks down a fence in an easement, who is required to put the fence back up?
- a) the utility.
 - b) the property owner.
 - c) whoever put it up originally.
 - d) it cannot be put back up in the easement.
38. A Right-of-Entry means
- a) the utility has the right to access federal and state property to use the water there.
 - b) customers have the right to enter the utility office during posted open hours.
 - c) the utility has the right to enter customers' property when necessary.
 - d) all of the above.
39. A mutual benefit clause means
- a) there will be no payment for allowing the utility entry onto private property.
 - b) all customers agree to subsidize the commercial users.
 - c) the basic operating philosophy of a non-profit utility.
 - d) any of the above.
40. A good public relations program
- a) is a long term project.
 - b) can pay for itself.
 - c) builds support for the utility.
 - d) all of the above.
41. Personnel records must be kept for
- b) three years after the termination of the employee.
 - a) eight years after the termination of the employee.
 - c) thirty years after the termination of the employee.
 - d) indefinitely.

42. Renewal and Replacement should be funded out of:
- a) user fees.
 - b) grant monies.
 - c) the customer requesting the renewal or replacement.
 - d) none of the above.
43. Who is responsible for sending out the bills?
- a) utility manager.
 - b) utility clerk.
 - c) utility operator.
 - d) policy making body.
44. How often should rates be adjusted?
- a) once a year.
 - b) once every other year.
 - c) only when service is upgraded
 - d) whenever the policy making body sees the necessity to.
45. The right to entry gives the utility the right to enter a home
- a) at any time.
 - b) only during normal business hours.
 - c) only in the case of an emergency.
 - d) only when the owner will allow it.
46. How many times should you warn a customer before you cut off service?
- a) three.
 - b) as many as it takes.
 - c) two.
 - d) as many as it says in the ordinance.
47. The utility manager is accountable to
- a) the policy making body.
 - b) himself only.
 - c) the voters.
 - d) the operator.

48. How long must an as-built be kept?
- a) only until the structure is built.
 - b) three years and then send it to ADEC.
 - c) five years after the structure is built and then destroy it.
 - d) as long as the structure is around.
49. Who is responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of the utility?
- a) utility manager.
 - b) utility clerk.
 - c) utility operator.
 - d) policy making body.
50. How many people does a utility need to have before it needs and organizational chart?
- a) five.
 - b) three.
 - c) 14.
 - d) any number.
51. How often should the organizational chart be updated?
- a) once a year.
 - b) once every six months.
 - c) only when service is upgraded.
 - d) whenever necessary.
52. Which of the following is not a usual duty of a utility manger?
- a) drafting the contingency plan.
 - b) hiring a clerk.
 - c) Accepting applications for connection.
 - d) preparing staff performance reviews.
53. Which of the following is NOT a level of service issue?
- a) the taste of the water.
 - b) how often bills are sent out
 - c) whether the operator is certified
 - d) none of the above.

54. The design life of a typical water plant is
- a) 10 years.
 - b) 20 years.
 - c) 50 years.
 - d) should last indefinitely if well maintained.
55. Routine maintenance should be funded out of
- a) short term bank loans.
 - b) state or federal grants.
 - c) the yearly operating budget.
 - d) none of the above.
56. Fire fighting support
- a) is required by law in Alaska.
 - b) requires a substantial investment in water system infrastructure.
 - c) requires a oversized sewer system to carry away the water used to fight a fire.
 - d) all of the above.

For the following 8 problems, match a definition on the right with the term on the left.

57. Right of entry ____ a) a local law.
58. ordinance ____ b) the general position or purpose of a person or entity.
59. Discontinuance ____ c) assignment of responsibilities to others.
60. Adequacy ____ d) how the utility would handle an emergency.
61. Delegation ____ e) maintenance of a minimum water pressure and flow.
62. Role ____ f) a document allowing one party to go onto another's property.
63. contingency plan ____ g) shutting off service.
64. accountability ____ h) maintaining a certainty that responsibilities are carried out.

65. A utility's *minimum* level of service is determined mostly by
- a) the utility manager.
 - b) state and federal regulations.
 - c) the loudest customers.
 - d) the depth of permafrost in the area.
66. Training the staff can improve
- a) efficiency.
 - b) morale.
 - c) the bottom line.
 - d) all of the above.
67. R&R stands for
- a) Rock & Roll.
 - b) Re-site & Restructure.
 - c) Rest & Relaxation.
 - d) Renewal & Replacement.
68. If meters are installed, they should be read
- a) every month.
 - b) on the same schedule as the billing cycle.
 - b) quarterly.
 - c) a minimum of twice during the winter, once during the summer.
69. A person's role is defined by
- a) the utility ordinance.
 - b) his/her job title.
 - c) their overall purpose in the organization.
 - d) all of the above.
70. The state requires a utility to hire a full time utility manager if
- a) the community population is over 800.
 - b) if it handles both sewer and water.
 - c) it has been audited.
 - d) none of the above.

71. In an advisory utility board structure
- a) the board hires outside advisors to help in decisions.
 - b) the board has only advisory influence over policy.
 - c) the manager advises the board on policy.
 - d) the board advises the manager in utility matters.
72. The level of service of a utility reveals
- a) how often periodic maintenance needs to be done.
 - b) staffing levels needed.
 - c) the true cost of operating the facility.
 - d) all of the above.
73. If there is not enough utility work for a full time operator or manager
- a) the two positions can be combined into a operator/manager position.
 - b) the two positions can share workers with the city or tribal government.
 - c) the two positions can use part time workers.
 - d) any combination of the above can be used.
74. A very frustrating situation for workers is to be given responsibility without
- a) time off.
 - b) authority.
 - c) a new title.
 - d) a and c.
75. Billing records must be kept for
- b) three years.
 - a) ten years.
 - c) thirty years.
 - d) indefinitely.
76. The definitions section of the utility ordinance should
- a) be no more than 2 pages long.
 - b) define technical terms as well as specific uses of more common words.
 - c) be written by the operator.
 - d) all of the above.

77. Authority is
- a) given by the immediate supervisor.
 - b) granted in the utility ordinance.
 - c) given as needed to carry out responsibilities.
 - d) all of the above.
78. A good public relations program pays off in
- a) higher percentage of bills paid and paid on time.
 - b) less system abuse.
 - c) more support for needed rate increases.
 - d) all of the above.
79. Which of the following facilities does the operator NOT need?
- a) workbench.
 - b) testing area.
 - c) visitor's area.
 - d) office space.
80. The utility's various records are maintained by:
- a) all records are maintained by the clerk.
 - b) different sorts of records are maintained by different staff.
 - c) all records are now kept on computer.
 - d) all records should be forwarded to the Alaska DEC office for storage.

Pre- and Post-Course Tests

Name **ANSWER KEY**

Instructions: circle the best one answer from the lettered phrases. On matching questions, write in the answer.

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 - c) is a combination of education and plain promotion.
 - d) only works in the schools.
15. Maintaining a minimum water pressure and water flow meets a requirement called
- a) psi.
 - b) adequacy.
 - c) volume specification.
 - d) Uniform Plumbing Code.
16. In a city-owned utility, utility funds should be kept
- a) in a bank the city owns stock in.
 - b) in the general fund of the city.
 - c) in a separate account from the city.
 - d) in the same account as the city but kept separate on paper.
17. Being held accountable means
- a) keeping the books.
 - b) being responsible for setting the rates for the level of service.
 - c) being made to answer for a certain task or function.
 - d) the person who will get blamed if anything goes wrong.

18. If a utility wishes to isolate itself from city politics the best structure listed is
- a) advisory utility board model.
 - b) strong utility board model.
 - c) the exopolitico model.
 - d) it doesn't make any difference.
19. An organizational chart shows
- a) each person's immediate supervisor.
 - b) each person's subordinates.
 - c) lines of authority and communication.
 - d) all of the above.
20. Who determines level of service issues?
- a) Whoever paid for the initial construction.
 - b) The State of Alaska.
 - c) The customers.
 - d) The manager.
21. The term enterprise means
- a) running the utility like a business.
 - b) seeking to cover expenses through user fees.
 - c) taking cost into consideration in decisions.
 - d) all of the above.
22. When adding new facilities to serve a specific property, funding should come from:
- a) the community as a whole.
 - b) the sale of bonds.
 - c) the new customer.
 - d) state or federal grants.
23. Service lines on private property are owned by
- a) the property owner.
 - b) the utility.
 - c) the city.
 - d) all parties jointly.

24. Customers exert their influence when they vote for
- a) changes in rates and charges.
 - b) the policy making body.
 - c) the utility manager.
 - d) the customer representative to the policy making body.
25. Rates and charges are set by the
- a) policy making body.
 - b) rates and charges commission.
 - c) the clerk.
 - d) none of the above.
26. Which of these is considered a legal document:
- a) the utility ordinance.
 - b) the customer agreement.
 - c) all of the above.
 - d) none of the above.
27. The utility ordinance is
- a) a law passed by the local governing body.
 - b) the charter of the utility drawn up by the building committee.
 - c) a law passed by the state legislature.
 - d) the customer's demands to the utility.

For the following 8 problems, match a definition on the right with the term on the left.

28. Past due account g a) the quality and quantity of products and service offered.
29. Capital c b) an organization operated in a business-like fashion.
30. Level of Service a c) money or anything of significant value that the utility owns.
31. Rate of return d d) what the utility earns compared with what goes out.
32. Stakeholder h e) the power to carry out tasks.
33. Authority e f) a document allowing the utility to leave water or sewer line or related equipment onto another's property.
34. easement f g) a late bill.

35. enterprise __b__h) someone with a vested interest in the utility.
36. When should you have an easement in a customer agreement?
- a) when utility-owned pipes cross private property.
 - b) always.
 - c) when the customer requests it.
 - d) when your attorney requires it.
37. If the utility knocks down a fence in an easement, who is required to put the fence back up?
- a) the utility.
 - b) the property owner.
 - c) whoever put it up originally.
 - d) it cannot be put back up in the easement.
38. A Right-of-Entry means
- a) the utility has the right to access federal and state property to use the water there.
 - b) customers have the right to enter the utility office during posted open hours.
 - c) the utility has the right to enter customers' property when necessary.
 - d) all of the above.
39. A mutual benefit clause means
- a) there will be no payment for allowing the utility entry onto private property.
 - b) all customers agree to subsidize the commercial users.
 - c) the basic operating philosophy of a non-profit utility.
 - d) any of the above.
40. A good public relations program
- a) is a long term project.
 - b) can pay for itself.
 - c) builds support for the utility.
 - d) all of the above.
41. Personnel records must be kept for
- b) three years after the termination of the employee.
 - a) eight years after the termination of the employee.
 - c) thirty years after the termination of the employee.
 - d) indefinitely.

42. Renewal and Replacement should be funded out of:
- a) user fees.
 - b) grant monies.
 - c) the customer requesting the renewal or replacement.
 - d) none of the above.
43. Who is responsible for sending out the bills?
- a) utility manager.
 - b) utility clerk.
 - c) utility operator.
 - d) policy making body.
44. How often should rates be adjusted?
- a) once a year.
 - b) once every other year.
 - c) only when service is upgraded
 - d) whenever the policy making body sees the necessity to.
45. The right to entry gives the utility the right to enter a home
- a) at any time.
 - b) only during normal business hours.
 - c) only in the case of an emergency.
 - d) only when the owner will allow it.
46. How many times should you warn a customer before you cut off service?
- a) three.
 - b) as many as it takes.
 - c) two.
 - d) as many as it says in the ordinance.
47. The utility manager is accountable to
- a) the policy making body.
 - b) himself only.
 - c) the voters.
 - d) the operator.

48. How long must an as-built be kept?
- a) only until the structure is built.
 - b) three years and then send it to ADEC.
 - c) five years after the structure is built and then destroy it.
 - d) as long as the structure is around.
49. Who is responsible for overseeing day-to-day operations of the utility?
- a) utility manager.
 - b) utility clerk.
 - c) utility operator.
 - d) policy making body.
50. How many people does a utility need to have before it needs and organizational chart?
- a) five.
 - b) three.
 - c) 14.
 - d) any number.
51. How often should the organizational chart be updated?
- a) once a year.
 - b) once every six months.
 - c) only when service is upgraded.
 - d) whenever necessary.
52. Which of the following is not a usual duty of a utility manger?
- a) drafting the contingency plan.
 - b) hiring a clerk.
 - c) Accepting applications for connection.
 - d) preparing staff performance reviews.
53. Which of the following is NOT a level of service issue?
- a) the taste of the water.
 - b) how often bills are sent out
 - c) whether the operator is certified
 - d) none of the above.

54. The design life of a typical water plant is
- a) 10 years.
 - b) 20 years.
 - c) 50 years.
 - d) should last indefinitely if well maintained.
55. Routine maintenance should be funded out of
- a) short term bank loans.
 - b) state or federal grants.
 - c) the yearly operating budget.
 - d) none of the above.
56. Fire fighting support
- a) is required by law in Alaska.
 - b) requires a substantial investment in water system infrastructure.
 - c) requires a oversized sewer system to carry away the water used to fight a fire.
 - d) all of the above.

For the following 8 problems, match a definition on the right with the term on the left.

57. Right of entry f a) a local law.
58. ordinance a b) the general position or purpose of a person or entity.
59. Discontinuance g c) assignment of responsibilities to others.
60. Adequacy e d) how the utility would handle an emergency.
61. Delegation c e) maintenance of a minimum water pressure and flow.
62. Role b f) a document allowing one party to go onto another's property.
63. contingency plan d g) shutting off service.
64. accountability h h) maintaining a certainty that responsibilities are carried out.

65. A utility's *minimum* level of service is determined mostly by
- a) the utility manager.
 - b) state and federal regulations.
 - c) the loudest customers.
 - d) the depth of permafrost in the area.
66. Training the staff can improve
- a) efficiency.
 - b) morale.
 - c) the bottom line.
 - d) all of the above.
67. R&R stands for
- a) Rock & Roll.
 - b) Re-site & Restructure.
 - c) Rest & Relaxation.
 - d) Renewal & Replacement.
68. If meters are installed, they should be read
- a) every month.
 - b) on the same schedule as the billing cycle.
 - b) quarterly.
 - c) a minimum of twice during the winter, once during the summer.
69. A person's role is defined by
- a) the utility ordinance.
 - b) his/her job title.
 - c) their overall purpose in the organization.
 - d) all of the above.
70. The state requires a utility to hire a full time utility manager if
- a) the community population is over 800.
 - b) if it handles both sewer and water.
 - c) it has been audited.
 - d) none of the above.

71. In an advisory utility board structure
- a) the board hires outside advisors to help in decisions.
 - b) the board has only advisory influence over policy.
 - c) the manager advises the board on policy.
 - d) the board advises the manager in utility matters.
72. The level of service of a utility reveals
- a) how often periodic maintenance needs to be done.
 - b) staffing levels needed.
 - c) the true cost of operating the facility.
 - d) all of the above.
73. If there is not enough utility work for a full time operator or manager
- a) the two positions can be combined into a operator/manager position.
 - b) the two positions can share workers with the city or tribal government.
 - c) the two positions can use part time workers.
 - d) any combination of the above can be used.
74. A very frustrating situation for workers is to be given responsibility without
- a) time off.
 - b) authority.
 - c) a new title.
 - d) a and c.
75. Billing records must be kept for
- b) three years.
 - a) ten years.
 - c) thirty years.
 - d) indefinitely.
76. The definitions section of the utility ordinance should
- a) be no more than 2 pages long.
 - b) define technical terms as well as specific uses of more common words.
 - c) be written by the operator.
 - d) all of the above.

77. Authority is
- a) given by the immediate supervisor.
 - b) granted in the utility ordinance.
 - c) given as needed to carry out responsibilities.
 - d) all of the above.
78. A good public relations program pays off in
- a) higher percentage of bills paid and paid on time.
 - b) less system abuse.
 - c) more support for needed rate increases.
 - d) all of the above.
79. Which of the following facilities does the operator NOT need?
- a) workbench.
 - b) testing area.
 - c) visitor's area.
 - d) office space.
80. The utility's various records are maintained by:
- a) all records are maintained by the clerk.
 - b) different sorts of records are maintained by different staff.
 - c) all records are now kept on computer.
 - d) all records should be forwarded to the Alaska DEC office for storage.

